THE PROBLEM CHILD

A. S. NEILL, M.A.

Author of

"A DOMINIE'S LOG," Etc.

NEW EDITION — WITH APPENDIX

★

This book deals with the difficult child, the child who is nervous and unhappy. Mr. Neill runs a school for difficult children, and his statements about children are based on actual experiences of children and parents. It is the most heretical book on education that has appeared in recent times.

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THE PROBLEM CHILD

WHAT THIS BOOK IS ABOUT

This book deals with the difficult child, the child who is nervous and unhappy. Mr. Neill runs a school for difficult children, and his statements about children are based on actual experiences of children and parents. His contention, in brief, is that the child is made difficult by wrong handling, and he has many criticisms of parents that will evoke bitter comment—from parents. The book deals most frankly with sex and religion. "The child is born good," says the author, "but we make him bad by teaching him morality." The book is an earnest plea for freedom for children; it is a plea for a new conception of religion and of morals. In short, it is the most heretical book on education that has appeared in recent times.

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A. S. NEILL

NEW EDITION
WITH APPENDIX

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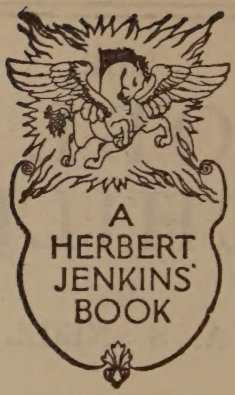

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THE PROBLEM CHILD

INTRODUCTION

"HE who can does: he who cannot teaches," says Bernard Shaw.

A most apposite introduction to this book. At the moment I am trying in vain to solve the problem of a boy who flies into violent passions. I flee from my problem, and sit down to write a treatise for parents. It is probable that if a man knew all about his subject he would have no desire to write about it. And in psychology no man can know very much. The inner forces of human life are still largely hidden from us. Psychology, since Freud's genius made it alive, has gone far, but it is still a new science, mapping out the coast of an

unknown continent. Fifty years hence psychologists will very likely smile at our ignorance to-day.

Since I left education and took up child psychology I have had various children to deal with—incendiaries, thieves, liars, bed-wetters, bad tempers, children who live their lives in phantasy. Four years' intensive work has convinced me that I know comparatively little of the force that drives human life. I am convinced, however, that parents who have had to deal only with their own children know less than I do. It is because I believe that a difficult child is nearly always made difficult by wrong treatment at home, that I dare address parents.

God gave mothers the maternal instinct. Every cat, cow, mare seems to know how to care physically for the young. An illiterate woman can rear a physically healthy child. An honours graduate woman of Cambridge can ruin the psyche of her child.

To blame mothers and fathers would be unfair. No one knows what the psyche of a child is. No one knows where a child is

going. No one knows where life is trending. Do we go to a heaven? Are we born again on this earth? Is death the entrance to nothingness? Or in the field of morals what do we know? Our standards of goodness and badness are geographical and temporal. Bigamy is a sin in England, but it is no sin in Egypt. Burning heretics was once a virtue. The word Damn was at one time a pass-word into Hell. One might say that morality is parochial. In one garden the children are not allowed to run about on a Sunday. In the garden over the wall the children are playing tennis. I am using the word morality in the sense of a standard of right behaviour, whether religious in origin or not. An atheist can ruin his family by imposing a code of morality just as effectively as a Baptist can.

To say that every parent ruins children would be to write nonsense. The average child manages to forge his own personality easily and comparatively happily. It is the peculiar child who suffers. Psychology has not gone far enough to explain why one boy

in a family plays football and lives merrily while his brother fears the rough and tumble of a game, and lives his life in phantasy. Psychology cannot tell why Brown likes golf and Smith collects stamps. There is no reason why it should attempt to explain. Life would be a dull thing if we knew exactly why we were doing things. I chose black and orange for my school colours. I have no desire to know why I did not choose green and white.

What then is the province of psychology? I suggest the word curing. I do not want to be cured of my incipient habit of choosing orange and black; I do not want to be cured of smoking. I do not want any analyst to cure my liking for a bottle of Bass. No teacher has the right to cure a child of making noises on a drum. The only curing that should be practised is the curing of unhappiness.

The difficult child is the child who is unhappy. He is at war with himself, and in consequence at war with the world. The "difficult" adult is in the same boat. No

happy man ever disturbed a meeting, or preached a war, or lynched a negro. No happy woman ever nagged her husband and children. No happy employer ever scared his employees. No happy man ever committed a murder or a theft.

All crimes, all hatreds, all wars can be reduced to unhappiness. This book will be an attempt to show how unhappiness arises and how it ruins human lives.

A. S. NEILL.

SUMMERHILL,
LYME REGIS,
DORSET.
November, 1925.

CHAPTER I

GOOD AND BAD

ALL communities have a standard of behaviour. This is good: that is bad. In a military community bravery is good, cowardice is bad. In a narrow religious sect swearing is bad, singing hymns good. One might say that there are certain rules of conduct that are common to all groups. A Chinese group and a crowd of footballers and a conference of Unitarians would have in common the code that it is wrong to kill, to steal, to lie, to slander. Yet relativity comes in. A national group does not consider it wrong to kill in war or to steal territory by conquest. A religious group has been known to crucify.

My work is with the children of Britain and the Continent. The crowds from whence

these children spring are, in morals, one big crowd. A German mother, an English mother and a French mother bring up their children very much in the same way. Goodness is the same goodness in London and Vienna, in Berlin and Paris.

The general idea in Europe is the conception that man is a sinner by birth, and that he must be trained to be good. The Christian Church states this belief openly; the crank of Golders Green states it by symbols. Where the Church cries: "We are miserable sinners," the Golders Green crank might cry: "We are born with bad taste." The bishop and the sandalled crank schoolmaster (I wear sandals myself) both agree that the child must be led to the Light. It does not matter whether the Light is the Light of the Cross or the Light of Post-Impressionism; the purpose is the same —to uplift. And the result to the child is the same—unhappiness, neurosis.

Since churches and schools agree that the child is born in sin, we cannot expect the mothers and fathers of England to disagree with the great authorities. The church says:

If you sin you shall be punished hereafter. The parent says: If you do that again I shall use my slipper. Both strive to elevate by introducing fear. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." It is much more often the beginning of neurosis and crime.

Many a time a parent has said to me: "I don't understand why my boy has gone bad. I have punished him severely, and I am sure he never saw bad examples in my house." My work is with the children who have been educated in goodness through fear of the cane or of the Lord. My work is negative, for it is the work of uneducating the educated.

The over-wrought parent of the bad boy does not, as a rule, challenge his or her own code of morals. "We have done our best for him," is always the cry. The belief then comes that it is the boy that is at fault. The boy is thought to be wilfully bad. Educated parents will talk about Atavism.

I cannot say the truth is, but I can declare my strong conviction that *the boy is never in the wrong*. Every case I have handled has been a case of misguided early education.

To-day, we, as a nation, believe that man is a creature of will. Ninety-nine per cent. of the people of Britain would say that Crippen could have been a non-murderer if he had used his will. The criminal law is founded on the belief that man is a responsible person capable of willing the evil or the good. Thus last week a man was imprisoned in London for splashing womens' dresses with ink. To society the splasher is an evil scoundrel who could be good if he would try. To the psychologist he is a poor, ill neurotic, doing a symbolic action of which he does not know the meaning. An enlightened society would lead him gently to a doctor.

The psychology of the unconscious has shown that most of our actions have a hidden source that we cannot reach unless by a long, elaborate analysis. And no analysis can reach the deepest parts of the unconscious. We act and we do not know why we act. Recently I laid aside my many volumes on psychology and took up inlay work. I do not know why. If I had taken up ink-splashing instead I would not have known why.

Because inlaying is social I am a respected citizen, and because ink-splashing is anti-social the other man is a despised criminal. There is one difference between the ink-splasher and me: I consciously like handwork, but he does not consciously like ink-splashing. In handwork my conscious and my unconscious are working in unison; in ink-splashing the conscious and unconscious are at variance. The anti-social act is the result of the conflict; it is a compromise.

One of my pupils, a boy of eleven, bright, intelligent, lovable, would be sitting reading quietly. Suddenly he would jump up, rush from the room, and try to set fire to the house. An impulse seized him, an impulse that he could not control. Many previous teachers had encouraged him, by counsel and cane, to use his will, to try to control his impulses. The impulse was too strong to be controlled. He was not a bad boy; he was a sick boy. Later I shall try to tell the story of the influences that made him sick.

CHAPTER II

THERE IS NO ORIGINAL SIN, THERE IS ONLY SICKNESS

WHEN we look at an infant we know that there is no wickedness in him, any more than there is wickedness in a cabbage or a young tiger. The child brings with him a life force. His will, that is his unconscious urge, is to live. His life force prompts him to eat, to explore his body, to gratify his wishes. He obeys the will of God. But to the adult the will of God in the child is the will of the devil. Hence it comes that every parent begins to teach the child how to live. The child soon comes up against a whole system of prohibitions. This is naughty; that is dirty; such and such is selfish. So that the original voice of God

meets the voice of instruction. The church would call the first voice the voice of the devil, and the voice of moral instruction the voice of God. I am convinced that the names should be reversed. I believe that it is moral instruction that makes the child bad. I find that when I smash the moral instruction a bad boy has received he automatically becomes a good boy.

There may be a case for the moral instruction of adults, although I doubt it. There is no case whatever for the moral instruction of children. It is psychologically wrong. To ask a little child to be unselfish is wrong. Every child is an egoist. The world belongs to him. His power of wishing is strong; he has only to wish and he is king of the earth. When he has an apple his one wish is to eat that apple. And the chief result of mother's encouraging him to share it with his little brother is to make him hate the little brother. Altruism comes later, comes naturally if the child is not taught to be unselfish; probably never comes at all when the child is taught to be unselfish. Altruism is selfishness on

promotion. The altruist is merely the man who likes to please others while he is satisfying his own selfishness.

By suppressing the child's selfishness the mother is fixing that selfishness. An unfulfilled wish lives on in the unconscious. The child who is taught to be unselfish will remain selfish through life. Moral instruction thus defeats its own purpose.

So is it in the sexual sphere. The moral prohibitions of childhood fix the infantile interest in sex. The many poor fellows who are arrested for infantile sexual acts—showing schoolgirls obscene postcards, throwing ink, cutting dresses in Oxford Street, exhibitionism—are men who had moral mothers. The perfectly harmless interest or act of childhood was labelled a heinous sin The child repressed the infantile desire. It lived on in the unconscious, and came out later in its original form or more often in a symbolic form. Thus the lady who lifts handbags from Selfridges is doing a symbolic act that has its origin in a repression due to moral teaching in childhood.

All these poor people are unhappy people. It is not in human nature to be anti-social. Egoism itself is enough to make normal people social. To steal is to be disliked by one's group, and the group instinct is a strong one. Very few men and fewer women dare to dress otherwise than in the fashion. To stand well with our neighbours is a genuine factor in human life. Only a stronger factor can make us anti-social.

What is this stronger factor? It is the desire to be true to oneself. When the conflict between the two selves—the self that God made and the self that moral education fashioned—is too bitter, egoism reverts to the infantile stage. The opinion of the crowd takes a subordinate place. Thus the kleptomaniac knows the awful shame of appearing in the police court and in the newspapers, but the fear of public opinion is not so strong as the infantile wish to satisfy an egoistic wish. Kleptomania, in the last analysis, signifies a wish to find happiness; but because the symbolic fulfilment of a wish can never satisfy the original wish, the victim goes on repeating her attempt.

An illustration will make clearer the process of the unfulfilled wish and its subsequent paths.

Little Billie, aged seven, came to my school. His parents told me that he was a thief. He had been a week in the school when one of my staff came to me and said that his gold watch had disappeared from his bedroom table. I asked my house-mother if she knew anything about it.

"I saw Billie with the works of a watch," she said. "When I asked him where he got it he said he found it at home in a very, very deep hole in the garden."

I knew that Billie locked all his possessions up in his trunk. I tried the lock with one of my own keys, and managed to open the box. In it lay the wreck of a gold watch, apparently the result of an attack with hammer and chisel. I locked the trunk and called in Billie.

"Did you see Mr. Anderson's watch?" I asked.

He looked up at me with large innocent eyes.

"No," he said, and added: "What watch?"

I looked at him for half a minute.

"Billie," I said, "do you know where babies come from?"

He looked up with interest.

"Yes," he said, "from the sky."

"Oh, no," I smiled. "You grew inside your mummy, and when you were big enough you came out."

Without a word he walked to his trunk, opened it, and handed me the broken watch. His stealing was cured, for he had been only stealing the truth. His face lost its puzzled, worried look, and he became happier. I mention Billie to suggest that a life of crime may date back to a mother's white lie.

The lay reader may be tempted to think that this dramatic cure was magical. It was not. When a child talks of a deep hole at home there is a chance that he is unconsciously thinking of the deep cavern in which his life began. Again I knew that the boy's father kept a few dogs. Billie must have known whence puppies come, and he must have put two and two together and

made a guess at the origin of babies. Mother's timid lie drove him to repress his theory, and his wish to find out the truth took a form of symbolic gratification. Symbolically he stole mothers and opened them up to see what was inside them. I had another pupil who kept opening drawers for the same reason.

Here we see clearly how stealing can be a moral act in disguise. Surely it is a laudable and moral act to attempt to find out the truth. It was the moral instruction implied by the parental lie that changed the moral seeking for truth into the immoral stealing. A lie is as much an abomination to the child as it is to the Lord.

There is in human life an urge to perfection. Coué's "I get better and better every day" expresses the universal wish. If the wish to be perfect were confined to real desires—the wish to be a better craftsman, to sing better, to know more—it would be a glorious wish. Unfortunately the general wish is apt to get narrowed down to behaviour. Moreover it becomes projected, and in adults we find the wish for perfection transformed

into the wish to make the other fellow better. All preachers and teachers are striving to make the other fellow perfect, but the hidden motive is in the self. They simply project the wish; they feel that in themselves they are miserable sinners, but they are unable to face the bitter truth about self, and they honestly believe that the man next door is the sinner who must be brought to repentance.

Moralists and disciplinarians are people who dimly realise their own imperfections. The mother who punishes her child for a small sexual habit is always the woman whose attitude to sex is a dirty one. The profiteer sitting as magistrate on the bench is honestly indignant at the accused man who stole a purse. It is because we have not the courage to face our naked souls that we are moralists. Christ could associate with publicans and sinners because He knew that He was no better and no worse than they were.

Our guidance of children is subjectively a guidance of ourselves. We unconsciously identify ourselves with the children, and the

child we dislike most is always the child who is likest to ourselves. We hate in others what we hate in ourselves. And because each of us is a self-hater the children get the result in cuffs and blows, and prohibitions and moralisings.

Why are we self-haters? It is the vicious circle. Our parents tried to improve the nature that God gave us. We are always in conflict between our instincts and our instruction, that is between God and conscience. We hand on the conflict to the new generation. For centuries man has preached a perfection in the skies. The belief in immortality is really a form of egoism—"I have failed to reach perfection in this life. Perhaps in the next I shall be perfect."

After all there may be original sin. There may be the original sin of seeking perfection, of forming ideals. Adam ate of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. That is he made for himself a standard of good and evil, became a moralist and idealist. Idealism is the curse of humanity; it has brought the most unhappiness into the world.

It is idealism that breeds immorality; it is idealism that refuses to allow the child to grow in grace. It seeks to force him, like a hothouse plant, in grace.

Not long ago I visited a modern school. Over a hundred boys and girls assembled in the morning to hear a parson address them. He spoke earnestly to them advising them to be ready to hear Christ's call. The head asked me later what I thought of the address. I replied that I thought it criminal. Here were scores of children with consciences about sex and other things. The sermon simply increased each child's sense of guilt. Christ's call was in each case effectively suppressed when mother first began to teach the child to be good. Christ's call was surely the call to love your neighbour as yourself. And by suppressing God's given instincts the mothers taught the children to hate themselves. To love others while hating yourself is impossible. We can only love others if we love ourselves.

What! cries the moralist. Are all the saints and martyrs wrong? Is Christianity an evil?

Christianity is an evil, but Christ was good. Christ cried: Live and be happy! St. Paul cried: Be moral and then you will be happy. Christ said: Be happy and you will be good: St. Paul said: Be good and you will be happy. St. Paul has been honoured, while Christ has been neglected. Christianity has become Paulianity. Not until we realise that Paul was a dangerous adapter of Christianity shall we give the children freedom to be themselves.

Paul has effectively negatived Christ's "Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not." Paul has forbidden the children to go to Christ. He has led them to a bleak land of prohibitions and joylessness. I never yet met a child who preferred Sunday School to Charlie Chaplin. I think that if Christ could come to earth he would lead the Sunday School scholars to the nearest cinema.

CHAPTER III

SEXUAL EDUCATION

MUCH has been written against modern psychology on the ground that it attributes too much to sex. It is generally accepted that there are two main instincts, the instinct of self-preservation and the instinct of race propagation, or as they are sometimes called the ego instinct and the sex instinct. Both must be of equal importance, but parents attach more importance to the sex instinct than to the ego instinct. The home condemnation of gluttony is never so strong as the home condemnation of sexual activities.

We know so little of causes and ultimates that we can only hazard guesses as to the origin of the sex taboo. It may have arisen

out of the ego instinct. The tribal father, anxious to keep his wives from the younger men, would try to give to chastity a supernatural importance. I think that Freud's theory is like this, but as I have given up reading books on psychology I cannot write with authority on Freud. Why there is a sex taboo is no immediate worry to us; that there is a sex taboo is a great worry to every man who is trying to cure souls.

I have never yet had a pupil who did not bring to school a diseased attitude to sexuality and to bodily functions. The children of modern parents who tell the truth about where babies come from have very much the hidden attitude to sex that the children of religious fanatics have. I see that to find a new orientation to sex is the most difficult task of the parent and teacher. We adults were corrupted in infancy; we can never be free about sex matters. Consciously we may; we may be members of societies for the sexual education of children, but I fear that we remain what education made us in infancy —haters and fearers of sex. I am quite

willing to believe that my unconscious attitude to sex is the Calvinistic one a Scots village made me adopt in my first years. There is possibly no salvation for adults, but there is every chance of salvation for the children if we do not force on them the awful ideas of sex that were forced on us.

The child early learns that the sexual sin is the sin against the Holy Ghost. Parents invariably punish most severely for an offence against sex morality. If we were not denied the faculty of seeing the truth in ourselves we could not punish a child. The people who rail against Freud because he "sees sex in everything" are adults who have told sex stories, have listened to sex stories, have laughed at sex stories. Every man and every woman outside a nunnery must admit that this is true. Every man who was in the army knows that the language of the army was a sex language. Nearly everyone likes to read the spicy accounts of divorce cases and of sex crimes in the Sunday papers. Men tell their wives the stories they bring home from their clubs and bars.

Now the delight in a sex story is due entirely to an unhealthy education in sex matters. It is due to repression; the story, as Freud says, lets the cat out of the bag. The new generation of educated children will probably have no appreciation of sex stories.

I am not writing as a kill-joy. In my university days I had some local fame as a raconteur, but analysis knocked the fun out of nearly all the stories I knew. I am attempting to show that the adult condemnation of sex in the child is hypocritical and a humbug. In truth the condemnation is a projection; a throwing of the guilt on to others. Parents punish severely for sex offences because they are vitally, if unhealthily, interested in sex offences.

It is interesting to speculate why the crucifixion of the flesh is popular. The hatred of the flesh may arise from man's fatal gift of making ideals. It is thought that the flesh drags one downward. The opposition of flesh and spirit is a commonplace in religion. The body is called vile; it tempts one to evil. "The spirit truly is

willing but the flesh is weak." Frail flesh. Everywhere we meet with this hatred of the body. It is this hatred that makes childbirth a subject for dark corners of the schoolroom, that makes drawing-room conversation a distinctive thing. Someone has remarked that in conversation we taboo the chief things of importance—religion and sex.

It is an interesting theory that disease is due to our hatred of the flesh. If we are taught to hate and despise the flesh from our earliest infancy, it seems natural for us to try to flee from the hated flesh as soon as possible. Cancer may be a method of punishing our bodies. Animals live until they die of old age or by violence. We can say fairly accurately that our dog will live to be fourteen years or thereabouts. The *Daily Mail Year Book* tells me that the average age of man is twenty-seven. I have been told that scientists have worked out a table of longevity, based on the period of gestation and the period up to puberty. Man works out in longevity at one hundred and fifty years. I do not know if this is a scientific

fact or not, and I do not know where to seek for more information. It is at any rate certain that man suffers from more diseases than does the animal. And it seems to be true that there is a fashion in disease. Twenty years ago the fashion was appendicitis; to-day it is cancer. If the theory is right that we unconsciously choose a disease as a means to the end of escaping from the sinful flesh, it is probable that the spread of cancer is the result of a collective unconscious movement. Possibly the doctor of to-morrow will set himself to discover the psychological reason why the patient wants to die. When Jesus said: "Go, and sin no more," He associated disease with sin. He seemed to believe that disease was self-inflicted as a punishment for sin.

In every man there are two wishes that predominate over all other wishes—the wish to live, and the wish to die. This latter wish is the result of moral teaching. The original life force was warped at its source. It was never allowed full expression. Always there was some or other adult to shake a warning

finger and to say, "Naughty, naughty!" Just as thwarted love can transform itself into hate, so can the thwarted desire for life be changed into a desire for death. Our newspapers are full of evidences of man's interest in death; full of murders, wars, animal hunting, scandals, fatal accidents. The circulation of a paper is relative to its interest in death; death in the broad sense of negation, destruction, unhappiness.

Hatred of the flesh has given to sex a prominence out of proportion to its importance. Before puberty sex should be of little importance. Biologically it has no function until puberty. It is the flesh-hatred attitude of adults that makes sex supremely interesting to children. The opponents of Freud are right in saying that he sees sex in everything. Every honest observer must see sex in everything. Moral education has put sex into everything. The first correction a mother makes when the child touches his sexual parts makes sex the most fascinating and mysterious thing in the world. To make fruit forbidden is to make it delectable and enticing.

Most children are masturbators. Much has been written about self release. There are many books that seek to help the young. I have seen only one that was sane and helpful.* The others were moral books; they told the youth that masturbation was evil, that it prevented growth, or led to disease or what not. These books had as their aim the suppression of masturbation. Now masturbation is primarily caused by moral instruction. If a wise mother paid no attention to her child's first exploration of his lower body I am convinced that masturbation would have no allurement for him. The *Verbot* fixes the interest. To a tiny child the mouth is much more of an erogenous zone than are the genitals. If mothers took the virtuous attitude to the mouth activities that they take to the genital activities, kissing would become a matter for conscience.

I have tried to show that each human has two parts of his make-up—the life force that God gave him, and the conscience that instruction gave him. In our every act we

* Stekel's *Onanie und Homosexualität*

try to satisfy both components. This is most clearly seen in the act of masturbation. The act itself satisfies the desire for happiness, for it is the climax of a tension. But immediately the act is over conscience takes hold of the child. The voice of moral instruction cries: You are a sinner! Now it is a fact that when the feeling of guilt is abolished the child has little or no interest in masturbation. It is the repentance component that is the strong factor. The child wants to repent. Any revivalist meeting will show that repentance can become a pleasurable orgy.

I imagine that it is the child with the finest ideals who indulges most in masturbation. Heights and depths are associated. The saint has the most earthly dreams. It is strange that many parents would rather have their children criminals than masturbators. I am finding daily that suppressed masturbation is at the root of many delinquencies.

A boy of eleven came to me. Among other habits he had the habit of incendiarism. He had been thrashed by father and teachers; worse still he had been taught the narrow

religion of hell fire and an angry God. Soon after coming to me he took a bottle of petrol and poured it into a vat of paint and turpentine. Then he set fire to the mixture. The house was saved only by the energy of two servants. I took him to my room.

"What is fire?" I asked.

"It burns," he said.

"What sort of a fire do you think of now?"

"Hell."

"And the bottle?"

"A long thing with a hole at the end. (Long pause).

"Tell me more about this long thing with a hole at the end," I said.

"My 'Peter', he said awkwardly, "has a hole at the end."

"Tell me about your 'Peter'," I said kindly. "Do you ever touch it?"

"Not now, I used to, but I don't now."

"Why not?"

"'Cos Mr. X (his last headmaster) told me that it was the greatest sin in the world."

I concluded then that his fire raising was a substitute act for masturbation. I told

him that Mr. X was quite wrong, that his "Peter" was no better and no worse than his nose or his ear. From that day his interest in fire went. About ten days later I asked him if he still believed what Mr. X had said. He smiled. "No," he said, "but I don't touch 'Peter' now."

"Why not?"

"Oh, I did it a few nights after you told me it wasn't bad, but then I got sick of it. Not much fun in it."

Of course there wasn't much fun in it. A boy of eleven, freely educated, would find life too absorbing to masturbate. By destroying the guilt component I destroyed the pleasure also.

The case of this boy illustrated the repentance compulsion. He knew his Bible well. One day I was speaking to a teacher and I mentioned something about sinning in order to repent. Robert looked up from his book.

"I know that one," he said brightly, "Verily I say unto you that there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine just men who need no repentance."

"Ah," I said with a laugh, "now I understand you, my lad. You are trying to do as many bad things as you can so that when you go to heaven you can repent and get a high place."

Robert was a criminal because he was too religious. We were on the top of Sonntagsberg, in Austria. The school was next door to a church of pilgrimage (a really awful place to have a school for boys like Robert). Two small shops sold candles and crucifixes. Robert when he stole money always ran and bought candles. Once he stole a candle from the shop window. On another occasion he stole a crucifix. I took him on the subject of candles. At once he smiled, and said that a candle was rather like "Peter."

"Yes," I said, "when Mr. X told you that 'Peter' was bad you wanted to find a better one, didn't you?"

"And I stole a holy one!" he cried and went off into laughter.

Sex in everything! Yes, but religion in everything else. Robert's interest in religion was much stronger than his interest in sex.

Sex was used merely as a means to sinning and repenting. Moreover the boy was sadly ignorant. He thought that babies grew on trees, although unconsciously he knew more than that. When I asked his father if the lad had had any sexual education, the father seemed surprised at the question.

"I don't know what you mean," he said.

"Has he been told where babies come from?" I asked.

"Mr. Neill," he said, "my boy has never heard any dirty talk in his life."

It is a pathetic commentary on the ignorance of parents to add that I learned later from the boy that at the age of seven bigger boys had misused him sexually.

In the introduction to this book I remarked that I was puzzled over a boy who came to me because he had violent tempers. They ended in something resembling an epileptic fit. Already I am beginning to see more clearly what ails the lad. He was boarded out with labouring people until he was five. Then he went to a school where Higher Thought prevailed. He learnt there that one should

be vegetarian because it is not nice to kill animals. He brought with him to school a card, one of those uplifting sets of rules of life—of the "I shall think only pure and noble thoughts" variety. The night of his arrival he appeared to be shocked when a little girl said an emphatic damn! when she dropped her bread on the floor. I asked him what he thought about it, and in a hushed voice he replied: "It's a word I've never dared to say."

I took him for half an hour daily and got him to talk about his life. I soon learned that he could say more shocking words than damn. His vocabulary was equal to that of any Pioneer detachment in the Army. Of course I laughed, and told him there was nothing wrong about swear words. Encouraged by my attitude he then began to tell me about an amazing boy called Jack who was also boarded out in the labourer's house. Jack was twelve when Jim was five. For days now I have sat and listened to tales of Jack. They are all tales about excrement and nakedness. To-day he told me how

Jack used to go up to a woman in the street and cut off her clothes, so that everyone saw her naked. But other stories of Jack, unprintable stories, beat that one for absurdity of imagination. Jack is Jim's phantasy self. He makes Jack do all the things he has wanted to do. It will be some time before I get down to the root of Jim's trouble. At the moment he is looking relieved and happy. I almost think that he will have no violent tempers here, for the outbursts were possibly due to the conflict between his early interests and the later ideals that he acquired. But on the other hand we all have a *Wiederholungsdrang* (clumsily in English: a compulsion to repeat things); Jim may use his tempers again for an obscure purpose of his own.

In this school I stand symbolically for father and God. Jim has had the wonderful experience of seeing father laughing at filth, encouraging him to go on talking filth. Father approves! There can't be much wrong with it!

I must make my attitude to masturbation clear. It is usually described by psychologists

as being a result of self-love, and they name it auto-eroticism. I find that it is more likely to be the result of self-hate. It is always associated with something guilty, and it is the habit that a child has most difficulty in confessing. I think it is Dr. Robie who remarks that ninety-nine out of every hundred people masturbate or have masturbated—"and the hundredth won't tell."

I do not believe that it does any harm whatever—physically; it is the feeling of guilt that breaks a child down. I find that by destroying the feeling of guilt one can make a child happier. I know cases where the destroying of the conscience about masturbation cured the patient altogether. I believe that all attempts to use will-power in the overcoming of the habit are useless when they are not disastrous. Stekel states that often the giving up of masturbation is the beginning of a bad neurosis. And we must remember that masturbation is often a safeguard. If we could stop it by a miracle crime would increase enormously. The habit can be a moral one. I think of a youth who

never masturbated until he went to visit his home. He had a strong fixation on his sister, a fixation of which he was not conscious. His masturbation in his home was a defence against the greater sin—incest.

Masturbation is disapproved of biologically because it is non-productive, just as homosexuality is disapproved of. Yet no one condemns marital indulgence because it only occasionally aims at production. I see no difference biologically between sexual intercourse that has no procreative aim and masturbation that cannot have a procreative aim. I do not know that I see any difference morally. Masturbation is partly the result of our civilisation. In a primitive state youths would be mating, but the economic basis of modern civilisation forces youth either to masturbate or to rush into clandestine promiscuity. Animals never masturbate, I am told, unless when they are kept in captivity or are domesticated. That may or may not be true.

In the case of small children the economic factor does not enter. In a boy of nine

masturbation cannot possibly be a substitute for normal sex intercourse. Small children have no orgasm. The pleasure of touching themselves is not an intense one. The habit is mainly due to the *Verbot*. Again and again I have had new pupils who came with dull faces, and with no interest in doing lessons of any kind. I have taken off the *Verbot* against masturbation, and the dull faces have become bright, the interest in everything has begun to grow. And in every case the masturbation has decreased.

What is the alternative to our taking up a non-moral attitude. To take up a moral attitude to the child is to drive his struggle underground. A boy or a girl may through fear of illness or hope of salvation control himself or herself for a time, but sooner or later human nature has its way and the child "falls." Thousands of our young boys and girls are spoiling their young lives miserably fighting and failing. Sermons and admonitions make the failures more difficult to bear. Each child thinks that he alone is the sinner against the Holy Ghost. Every adult who reads these

lines knows the truth about the awful struggle of youth. I say: Let us be honest about it all; let us face the facts without prudery and hypocrisy. Let us abolish the dangerous *Verbot*. The world will be a better place, for there will be fewer self-haters in it. I write it without blasphemy—that a child is nearer to God in masturbation than in repenting. Destroy the repenting component and we destroy the morbid compulsion to masturbate. The devil that we call moral instruction is the main cause of masturbation.

A case of bed-wetting was due primarily to repressed masturbation. I tried to abolish the *Verbot*, but there was no sign of a cure. I concluded that the father of the boy, being the man who first gave the *Verbot*, must be the man to take it off. I advised him to do so, and the result was that the bed-wetting was cured. That was not of great importance, for bed-wetting is only a disagreeability. What was of great importance was the fact that the boy, who had been a dullish lad, with no ability to learn and concentrate, suddenly began to look bright and to take

an interest in things. He is now a normal little boy with no special interest in sex.

Repressions about excrement are just as common and just as dangerous as repressions about sex. Indeed in the child the two form one repression. Owing to nature's placing the excretory and the sexual organs together, the child gets the idea that either is filthy. I think that the shame attached to masturbation comes largely from the shame attached to excretion. I find that every child is interested in faeces. Visitors to the school must sometimes go away with queer thoughts about us, for sometimes we all talk water-closets. It is absolutely necessary to do so. A girl of eleven came to the school. Her only interest in life was water-closets. Her delight was to peep through the keyhole. I at once changed her lessons from geography to water-closets. She had great delight. After ten days I made a remark about water-closets. "Don't want to hear about them," she said wearily. "Fed up speaking about water-closets.

It is always so. The child must be free to live out these interests. Suppression and

silence simply drive the interest underground. Of course I try to let the anal-erotics live out their interests in material. Making mud pies is an excellent way of taking the interest over from faeces. But here the child must be told what he is doing. It is possible to make mud pies for years without living out the original interest in excrement. In a newspaper article the other day I mentioned the child's right to make mud pies, and a well-known Montessorian educationist replied in a letter saying that his experience showed that the child did not want to make mud pies *when given something better to do* (mine the italics). There is nothing better to do—when one's interests are fixed in mud. Montessori children are not different from other children. The early training in cleanliness fixes an interest in faeces for every child. I have one boy pupil at present who cannot take an interest in any lesson because he is still almost wholly interested in excrement and its likenesses. Only when he has exhausted his interest will he be able to go on to mathematics. The teacher's work is

simple—to find out where a child's interest lies and to help him to live it out.

I shall adopt the well-known trick of putting up a questioning figure and knocking it down again. Let me call it Mrs. Morality. Let her fire questions at me.

"But won't this method of yours make the children filthy-minded?"

"No, it is your method that fixes what you call filth as a permanent interest. Only when one has lived out an interest is one free to go on to new interests."

"Do you actually encourage children to talk about water-closets?"

"Yes, when I find them interested in water-closets. It is only in the more neurotic cases that the talking out takes more than a week."

"What of morality?"

"I want a new morality. You cannot have a good morality when the unconscious is infantile in its interests. Morality to-day builds a beautiful marble cathedral on a dung heap. I want to build one on solid earth. Your morality flourishes along with prostitution and slums and crimes. If it had had any

real value it would have washed these social evils away long ago."

"But aren't you preaching licence, sexual licence?"

"Ah! You picture the new morality as producing scores of Don Juans!"

"What is a Don Juan? He is a man who is seeking to love. He tries, fails, tries again, again, again. Freudians claim that he is constantly seeking the mother who appeared an ideal angel to his infant eyes. I think rather that he is seeking the love that his mother denied him, the love of life that her instruction warped. He is neurotic always. No happy, healthy man is a seducer. Don Juanism is a phenomenon resulting from the parental taboo of sex; it is an attempt to live out infantile repressions. Each attempt fails because the original infantile wish remains unconscious. There is no Don Juanism among animals. It is a disease of a civilisation that cherishes ideals.

"I believe that if we could prevent a child from seeing evil in sex he would grow up a moral man—not a moralist, that is, not

a teacher of others. After all the function of sex is to propagate. Don Juan fulfils the pleasure component of sex while rejecting the biologically important part—the creation of life. Masturbation, Don Juanism, homosexuality can have only this stone cast at them, that they are unproductive. This new moral man who is to grow up will find that he must fulfil both functions of sex; he will find that unless he loves, that is wants to be God and make man in his own image, he will not find any pleasure in the sexual act."

"I am glad to hear you state your belief in the sacredness of sex. I have always told my children that sex is sacred."

"Madam, I do not agree with you. If sex is sacred why not call sneezing sacred? This telling children that sex is sacred is simply a variant of the old story that they would go to hell. It leads to dangerous repressions. If you agree to call eating and drinking and laughing sacred I am with you. We can call everything sacred, but if we select sex only we are cheating ourselves and

misguiding the new generation. The child is sacred if you like, sacred in the sense of being a thing not to be spoiled by ignorant touching."

"But children brought up without religion and morality will never be able to control themselves."

"Madam, it is difficult to argue with you because you believe in original sin. You believe that we are honest because the policeman is round the corner. I believe there would be more honesty in the world if policemen were abolished. There is not a liar among my pupils. When they first come they lie every time because they fear to tell the truth. When they find that the school is a school without a policeman they find no use for lies. It is the law that makes the crime. But you mentioned religion and morality. These children are brought up without religion and morality, that is, no adult tries to guide their steps. But no one can live without some kind of religion, some kind of morality. The children will make their own religion and morality. They won't be your religion and

morality, nor will they be mine. Your question really means: If they have nothing to fear how can they be good? In this year of 1925 I fancy that many people realise that a goodness that depends on fear of hell or policemen or punishment, or depends on hope of reward or praise or heaven is simply cowardice. Our morality makes children cowards, for it makes them fear life. By imposing his own morality and religion the parent is trying to make the child in his own psychical image. I say that no man is good enough to make anyone in his own psychical image. To-day I looked at Jim's card—"I will try to be pure in thought, word, and deed"—and for an hour this morning poor little Jim talked to me nothing but excrement phantasies. The attempt to give him an adult's conception of religion and morality has made him a very ill boy. Personally I think that Jim's phantasies are nearer to God than is the code of the card. God is not in the skies; he is on the ground.

CHAPTER IV.

THE STORK AND OTHER LIES

I HAVE shown (page 21) how a mother's white lie can make her son a thief. It is a matter for speculation how much crime could be dated to parents' lies, black and white. What a white lie is exactly I do not know; it is possibly an evasion as opposed to a direct lie. Both kinds of lie have the same effect on a child: they make mother a liar for ever.

There is no logical excuse for telling a child a lie. The only excuse is an emotional one; it would harm the child to know the truth. And within limits there is truth in this. I recall a pupil of mine, a Swiss girl of fifteen, saying: "Irmgart (aged ten) thinks that the doctor brings the babies. I knew where babies came from long ago. Mother told me. She told me more than that."

I asked her what, and she told me all about homosexuality and perversions. Here was a case of unwise truth telling. The mother should have answered only the question that the child asked. Her ignorance of child nature made her tell the child much that the child could not possibly assimilate. The result was a neurotic daughter.

Yet, in the main, I think that this unwise mother was wiser than the mother who lies to her child when it asks the secret of birth. For the child soon finds out that mother lied. And the child soon tells the truth about babies to himself; he phantasies birth. Often I find in children the queerest fancies about birth. When the child does find out the truth, usually half told by companions in a dirty way, he thinks he knows why mother told him a lie. How could mother tell me anything so dirty as that! And really that is the attitude of society to birth to-day. It is a dirty business, a shameful business. The fact that a pregnant mother tries to dress in a way to disguise her state is enough to damn what we call our morality. Even the Sunday

papers never go farther than saying: "Accused was in a certain condition," just as they say: "He was suffering from a certain disease." We really are a feeble generation. It is our feebleness that makes us lie to children.

There are what we might call modern mothers who tell their children the truth about babies. Excellent. Yet among these mothers we find many who tell the truth about birth but a lie about sex. I often get pupils who have known for years the truth about babies, but they have also known from mother that the body is not to be touched. I find just as many masturbators among the children of the moderns as among the children of the ancients. I find the same overwhelming feeling of guilt, the same regressive interest in excrement.

It may be that most of the modern mothers are members of a modern cult. All Theosophists, for example, tell their children the truth about birth; all the New Thought people. But their downrightness in truth is counterbalanced by their belief in the Higher Life. They say: There is nothing

wrong in an interest in excrement, but the child must be led to the higher things. Thus the Higher Life people try to lead a child from Charlie Chaplin to Shakespeare. The best known Higher Life school in Germany compels all pupils to listen to Bach for half-an-hour before breakfast. Now this attempt to give a child a standard of values has psychologically the same effect on the child as the old Calvinistic hell threat. It makes the child repress what he is told is lower. It tells the child a definite lie, for the truth is that higher and lower are relative. To say that Shakespeare is higher than Charlie is wrong. To say that Shakespeare's blank verse is better than the blank verse Charlie would write is no doubt true. On the other hand Charlie can do more with a moving staircase than Shakespeare could have done. Which is higher, writing blank verse or juggling with a moving staircase, is a matter of opinion. My pupils would certainly vote for Charlie. So would the pupils of the Higher Life schools if they were free to be themselves.

Every opinion forced on a child is a lie. A child is not a little adult. A child of eight cannot possibly see the adult's point of view Last night I said to five boys whose ages range from seven to eleven: "Miss Y has influenza and is feeling bad. Try not to make a noise when you are going to bed." They promised to be quiet. Five minutes later they were having a pillow fight with great noise. Leaving out of consideration the chances of their having an unconscious desire to make life for Miss Y nasty, I must contend that the fault lay in their age. They are all egoists; they have not reached the stage of having a developed social sense. In our school congress where the community makes its laws these young children are bored. They don't want to make laws; they want to kill Red Indians.

A stern voice and a cane would have secured peace for Miss Y, but a peace at the expense of introducing fear into their lives. We adults have to make sacrifices. The universal method of dealing with children is to teach them to adapt themselves to our

ideas of life and peace. It is hard for the father who comes home from a busy day in an office, but it should not be hard for the teacher. Well, that is putting it too strongly. There are moments when I want to run away from the demands of my pupils. It was only two days ago that the School Congress voted that Neill should have peace from two to five daily to write his book—"but after five he can be ragged" (amendment moved by a new girl, sent to me because she broke all rules at her last school.)

It is not easy to trace the influences that make a child a liar. Not long ago I sat at table with a family, and the mother related, with laughter, the story of a friend of hers who takes her fourteen year old son travelling on the railway with a half ticket. The family laughed. Two little children sat at table. What they thought I do not know. We all underestimate the child's capacity for grasping things. I find that one of the most difficult cases of neurosis to cure is the one dating from the time when the child of three or four slept in its parents' bedroom, and heard and saw

what the parents never suspected it heard and saw. Many children hear mother say: "Oh, say that I'm not at home."

I grant that it is very hard to be truthful always, but when one makes a decision never to lie to a child or before a child, one finds it easier than one expected. The only good permissible lie is the kind of lie one has to tell when life is in danger—when a seriously ill child is not told of its mother's death.

The main difficulty in telling children the truth is this, that we all fail to tell ourselves the truth. We lie to ourselves, and we lie to our neighbours. It is probable that we lie to ourselves because of our skeleton in our cupboard. Every autobiography ever written is a lie. We lie because we have been taught to live up to an unreachable standard of morality. It was our early training that gave us the skeleton that we try ever to hide. A new generation will come with no skeletons to hide. It will be frank and honest about everything. It will not require the word lie in its vocabulary. Lying is always cowardice, and cowardice is the result of ignorance.

CHAPTER V

THE CHILD'S WISHES

BEFORE psychology discovered the importance of the unconscious a child was considered a reasonable being, with the power to will good or evil. His mind was held to be a blank slate on which the teacher had to write the lines of his life. Now we understand that there is nothing static about a child; he is one dynamic urge. He seeks to express his wishes in action. He is by nature self-interested, and he seeks always to try his power. If there is sex in everything, there is power in everything.

The tiny child very probably finds that noise expresses his power over his environment best of all. The reaction of his adult companions to noise may give to noise an exaggerated importance to the child. Or

noise in itself is important enough. Certainly a drum or a hammer makes the result of one's power apparent. Noise is often suppressed in the nursery, but before the noise period a suppression takes place, the suppression involved in making the child clean in habits. We can only guess that a child feels himself powerful in his excretory acts. It seems likely that his toilet means much to him, for it is his first act of making. I say we can only guess, for no one can say what a child of one or two years feels and thinks. Certainly one finds children of seven and eight who have a strong feeling of power in their excretory acts.

It is possible to make a child clean without giving him a fixed repressed interest in bodily functions. The kitten and the calf seem to have no complex about excrement. The complex in the child comes from the manner of his instruction. When the mother begins to say "Naughty" or "Dirty" or even "Tut Tut," the element of right and wrong enters. The question becomes a moral one when it should remain a physical one. Thus

the wrong way to deal with a coprophilic child is to tell him he is being dirty. The right way is to allow him to live out his interest in excrement by providing him with mud or clay. He sublimates his interest without repression; he lives through his interest and in doing so kills it. At present I am encouraging Jim, the eight year old boy with phantasies about faeces, to make mud pies, but all the time I am telling him what he is really interested in. With a child of five the telling would be unnecessary; he would live out his phantasies easily in mud work. In the case of a problem boy of eight I think it necessary to hurry the process by letting him know what he is doing. I do not say directly: You are doing this because it is a substitute for that. I only remind him of the similarity between the two elements. Whichever method is right, the method is working all right in Jim's case.

The suppression of noise never gives the child so strong a repression as does the suppression of interest in bodily functions. Noise is never called dirty. The tone of

voice that father adopts in shouting: Stop that row! is an open, heart-felt expression of impatience, while the tone of mother when she says: Pfui! Dirty! is a shocked, moral tone. I can cure a noise complex in a child in a week, but an excrement complex takes many weeks.

Readers of modern psychology will know the phrase: Every fear is a wish in disguise. The phrase is misleading. If I meet a tiger I am not wishing to be eaten—unless, of course, my moral education made my death wish extra strong. This opens up conjecture. Is the man who runs away from the battle the man who has the strongest unconscious wish for death? It may be. But as far as we know the fear that comes from meeting a tiger is not a wish in disguise. What is true is that a phobia is a wish in disguise. A fear is an emotion attached to reality; a phobia is an emotion attached to a symbol of reality. A normal woman fears a lion; a neurotic woman fears a mouse or a snail. The lion represents itself, but the mouse represents a repressed interest that the woman fears to recognise.

Now the child's wishes can be converted into phobias by suppression. Freud's analysis of Little Hans is a case in point. Many children have night terrors; they fear ghosts or horses or robbers or bogeymen. Often the stories of nurse-maids are held to be responsible for these terrors, but the nursemaid merely gives the phobia a form. The root of the terror is the suppression of sex interest by the parents. The child fears his own buried interests, just as the woman with the beetle phobia fears her buried interests.

Now the suppression need not be primarily one of sex suppression. The angry father who shouts: Stop that row! can convert the child's interest in noise into a fearful interest in father. The child easily divides his interest. When a mother forbids her child to light a match the original interest in fire becomes an interest in fire and mother associated. Holt in *The Freudian Wish*, an excellent little book, deals clearly with the situation of Mother plus Fire.

Most people now know the theory that the little boy is jealous of his father because

father possesses the boy's first love, his mother. The girl is jealous of the mother for a similar reason. Teachers and doctors dealing with children find many evidences of this jealousy in the form of repressed hate for the parent of the same sex as the child. But I believe that too little importance is attached to the power theories of Alfred Adler. I find boys who have quite a lot of hate for mother, girls who hate their fathers. When a child's wish is thwarted he hates. If I take a toy from a bright youth of three he would kill me if he could. From the sexual theory point of view a boy fears his father because he feels guilty of treason towards him, guilty of desiring mother. If father were to find out, what a terrible fellow he would be! From the power point of view the boy fears father because he has wished father's death when father suppressed his wishes. The fear in this case is a fear of one's own guilty thoughts. It is difficult to judge between the two theories It is not easy to keep an open mind. I think of the case of little Billie who broke the gold watch (page 21). His father was

serving in Mesopotamia when he was born and he was almost three when the father came home. From the first his attitude to father was a hostile one. Up till this time Billie was *Herr im Haus*. He was father. It was quite natural for him to feel aggrieved.

One day I was sitting with Billie. I was in a deck-chair striped black and orange. I, of course, am father substitute to Billie.

"Tell me a story," he said.

"You tell me one," said I.

No, he could not tell a story; I must tell one.

"We'll tell one together," said I. "When I stop you say something—eh?

Well then, there was once a——"

Billie looked at my chair with its stripes.

"Tiger," he said, and I knew I was the animal with the stripes.

"And it lay at the roadside outside this school. One day a boy went down the road and his name was——"

"Donald," said Billie. Donald is his chum.

"Then the tiger sprang out and——"

"Ate him up," said Billie promptly.

"Then Derrick said: I won't have this tiger eating up my brother. So he buckled on his revolver and went down the road. And the tiger jumped out and——"

"Ate him up," said Billie cheerfully.

"Then Neill got wild. I simply won't have this tiger eating all my school," he said; and he buckled on his two revolvers and went out. The tiger jumped out and——"

"Ate him up, of course."

"But then Billie said that this wouldn't do. So he buckled on his two revolvers, his sword, his dagger, and his machine-gun and went down the road. And the tiger jumped out and——"

"He killed the tiger," said Billie modestly.

"Excellent!" I cried, "he killed the tiger. He dragged its body up to the door and came in and called a *Schulgemeinde* (general meeting). Then Mrs. Lindsay got up and said: "Now that Neill is inside the tiger we shall need a new head-master, and I propose——"

Billie looked down and was silent.

"And I propose——"

"You know well enough it was me," he said with annoyance.

"And so Billie became headmaster of Summerhill School," I said. "And what do you think was the first thing he did?"

"Went up to your room and took your turning-lathe and typewriter," he said without hesitation or embarrassment.

I have another story of Billie. One day he said to me, "I know where I can get a bigger dog than what father has." His father has two Skye terriers.

"Where?" I asked, but he shook his head, and would not tell me.

"What will you call it, Billie?"

"Hose pipe," he answered.

I handed him a sheet of paper.

"Let me see you draw a hose pipe," I said.

He drew a large phallus. I suddenly thought of an old cycle pump I had. I fetched it and showed Billie how to use it as a water squirt.

"Now," said I, "you have a bigger hose pipe than father has," and he laughed loudly. For two days he went round the school

gleefully squirting water. Then he lost interest in his hose pipe and lost it.

The question is this: Is Billie a sex case or a power case? I think he is a power case. His wish to kill the tiger (me) was the repetition of his wish when he first saw father. It had nothing directly to do with sex. And his wish to have a phallus bigger than father's was a power wish. Billie's phantasies are power phantasies. I hear him telling the other boys tall stories of the number of aeroplanes he can drive at one time. There is ego in everything.

The thwarted wish is the beginning of phantasy. Every child wants to be big; every factor in his environment tells him that he is small. He at once conquers environment by fleeing from it; he rises on wings and lives his dream in phantasy. The ambition to be an engine-driver is a power motive. To control a train, rushing along at speed, is one of the best illustrations of possible power. Peter Pan is popular with children, not because he does not grow up, but because he can fly and fight pirates. He

is popular with grown-ups because they want to be children, without responsibilities, without struggles. But no boy really wants to remain a boy. The desire for power urges him on.

Now the suppression of infantile noise and curiosity warps the natural love of power. The youths who are called delinquents, and are generally said to be suffering from too much cinema-going, are trying to express power that has been suppressed. I invariably find that the anti-social boy, the leader of a gang of window-breakers, becomes, under freedom, a strong supporter of law and order.

I had a new pupil once, Ansi, a Swedish girl of fourteen. She had been a leader of law-breakers in her school, and the school could not keep her. Two nights after her arrival she began to fight with me playfully, but soon her play became earnest. For about three hours she kicked and bit me, saying all the time that she would make me lose my temper. I refused to lose my temper and kept smiling. It was an effort. Finally one of my teachers sat down and played soft

music. Ansi quietened down. Her attack was partly sexual, but on the power side I stood for law and order. I was headmaster.

Ansi found life rather confusing. She found a school where there were no laws to break, and she felt like a fish out of the water. She tried to stir up mischief among the other children, but succeeded only with the tiny ones. She was trying once more to find her accustomed power in leading a gang against authority.

Ansi was really a lover of law and order. But in the domain of law and order the adults ruled—parents, teachers. For her there was no scope to express her power. As a second best she chose the side of rebellion against law and order.

It is only thwarted power that works for evil. Humans are good; they want to do good; they want to love and be loved. Hate and rebellion are only thwarted love and thwarted power.

CHAPTER VI

LOVE AND HATE

LOVE and hate are not opposites. The opposite to love is indifference. Hate is love that is changed to the other side of the coin by thwarting. Hate has always a fear in it. We see this in the case of the child who hates a younger brother. His hate is caused by fear of losing mother's love, and also by fear of his own thoughts about his brother. Billie hated his father, just returned from the war, because he feared him as a rival who would take his power and his mother from him. When my rebellious pupil, Ansi, came to school she started out by kicking me to make me angry. I was the unfortunate substitute for father. She hated and feared her father. She was not allowed to sit on his knee. Her love for father was changed into

hate by his not reacting to her love. Suddenly she found a new father who did not react with sternness; one whom she did not fear. Her hate came out. The fact that next day she was exceedingly tender and gentle to me is proof that her hate was disguised love. But there is much over-determination in this case. To understand the full significance of her attack on me would mean to know and understand first of all the story of her warped attitude to sex. She came from a girls' school where chums discussed sex morbidly and dirtily in corners. Her hate of father had much in it of the hate a wrong education in sexual matters had given her. And her hate for a mother who had often punished her was intense.

Few parents realise that by punishing they change love into hate. Hate in a child is very difficult to see. Mothers who notice that their children are tender after a spanking do not know that the hate roused by the spanking was immediately repressed. But repressed material is not dead; it is only sleeping. There is a little book called *Morals*

for the Young, by Marcus. I often try the experiment of reading its verses to children. One verse runs:

> Tommy saw his house on fire,
> His mother in the flames expire,
> His father killed by falling brick,
> And Tommy laughed—till he was sick.

This verse is the favourite. The children laugh very loudly when they hear it read. The children who love their parents laugh very loudly. They laugh because of their repressed hate for parents, hate made by spankings or criticism or punishment. Usually the hate comes out in phantasies seemingly remote from parents. Billie's hate of father appeared in the tiger story as a delight in my death and in his supplanting me. One little pupil of mine, a boy who loves his father dearly, likes to phantasy that he shoots a lion. If I ask him to describe this lion he soon finds some connection with father. One morning I took each pupil separately and told the story of my own death. Each face brightened as I told of the funeral. The group was specially cheery that afternoon. Stories of

giant killing are always popular with children because the giant is Daddy.

There should be nothing shocking about a child's hate of parents. It always dates from the period when the child was an egoist. The child under seven seeks love and power. Every angry word, every slap, every deprivation is an injury to love and power. Every scolding word from mother means to the child "Mother does not love me. I don't care"; every: "Don't touch that!" from father means: "He stands in my way. If I were his size . . . !" Yes, there is a hate of parents in the child, but it is not so dangerous as the hate of children in the parents. The naggings, ragings, spankings, lecturings of parents are hate reactions. Thus the child of parents who do not love each other has a bad chance of development. "Taking it out" on the children is a universal habit.

In the most favourable circumstances the child meets with situations that make him hate. The child's desire to be grown up is a power wish. The mere size of adults will give a child a sense of inferiority. Why should

the grown-ups be allowed to sit up late? Why do they have the best things—typewriters, cycles, good tools, watches? It is the only child whose power is most thwarted, and it is the only child that is most difficult to handle in a school. I once made the mistake of bringing a little boy to school ten days before the other pupils arrived. He was very happy mixing with the teachers, sitting in the staff-room, having a bedroom to himself. When the other children came he became very anti-social. Alone he had helped to make and repair many articles; when the others came he began to destroy things. His pride was injured. He had suddenly to cease being an adult; had to sleep in a room with four other boys; had to go to bed early. His violent protest made me decide never again to give a child the opportunity of identifying himself with the grown-ups.

Objective hate is not difficult to understand, but when we enter the region of subjective psychology we can only grope our way. We are easily led from psychology to philosophy. It is easier to realise a hate of a father than a

hate of one's own personality. One might say that it is safer also. Subjective psychology at the moment is obscure and dangerous. Herbert Silberer wrote a brilliant book on *Problems of Mysticism and its Symbolism.* Writing of introversion, that is "sinking into one's own soul; the withdrawal of interest from the outer world; the seeking for joys that can be afforded by the inner world," Silberer says: "Introversion is no child's play. It leads to abysses, by which we may be swallowed up past recall . . . . This depth is seducing: it is the 'mother' and—death." Silberer committed suicide. Introversion is, indeed, no child's play. I would not think of leading any child to subjective psychology. Let me give an example of what might be dangerous psychology.

When I was treating the case of Robert, the incendiary and thief and potential homicidal (see page 37) I naturally got all his hate and love of father transferred to me. One day, after a talk with me, he ran out and squashed a large snail with his heel. I asked him to describe a snail, and he answered:

"A long, ugly, slimy brute." I handed him a piece of paper and asked him to write the word snail.

He wrote "A SNail."

"Look at what you have written," I said

Suddenly he burst into laughter.

He took his pencil and wrote my name underneath:

"A. SNail"
"A. S.Neill."

"You didn't realise that I was the long, ugly, slimy brute that you wanted to jump on, did you?" I remarked with a smile.

Thus far there was absolutely no danger to the boy. To make his hate of me conscious (he found it out himself) was excellent for him. But suppose I had gone on to say something like this: "Of course I was the snail, but really you do not hate me; you hate the part of yourself that I stand for. You are the slimy brute that must be killed. You were killing a quality in yourself . . . etc." That, to me, would have been dangerous psychology. After all the child should not be taught psychology. His job is to

play marbles and to fly kites. All that I or any teacher or doctor is entitled to do is to free the child from conflicts that prevent his flying kites. Stekel, of Vienna, always says to his cured and departing patients: "Forget all about your analysis. Don't read books on psychology." Excellent advice.

Agreeing that subjective psychology is not for children we can attempt to find out how hate can become subjective. Everything is in the ego; our loves and hates are in ourselves.

I advanced the theory that the child receives his conscience from his mother, father, teacher, parson—from his environment in general. His unhappiness is the result of the conflict between conscience and human nature. Conscience may win so complete a victory that the boy becomes a monk, and renounces the world and the flesh. In most cases a compromise takes place; a compromise that is partly expressed in the phrase "to serve the devil on week days and God on Sunday."

I have already pointed out that no child under eight is selfish, that he is an egoist. In the case of a boy of six whose father teaches

him to be unselfish and beats him when he is selfish, the conscience is at first outside the boy. It is objective. "I must share my sweets when father is looking." But a process of identification begins. The boy wants to be as big as father, (the power motive); he wants to have as much of mother as father has (the love motive). He identifies himself with father. And in the process he takes his father's philosophy. He is a little Conservative or Liberal. He, as it were, adds his father to his own soul. The conscience, at first father's voice without, becomes father's voice within. This is the process by which we become Baptists or Calvinists or Vegetarians or Theosophists. Girls who were spanked by mother grow into spankers. An excellent illustration is the playing-school game of children. Teacher whacks all the time.

Subjective psychology leads us to astounding speculations. Can we say that the girl who rebels against all authority is really rebelling against the authority in herself? I have already mentioned Ansi, the pupil who was a rebel against all authority. A week

after her arrival we had a school Parliament. Ansi stood and jeered at everything said.

"I'll vote for laws," she said, "but only for the fun of having some laws to break."

My house-mother got up.

"Ansi shows that she doesn't want laws that everyone will keep," she said. "I propose that we have no laws at all. Let us have chaos."

Ansi shouted Hurrah! and led the pupils out of the room. This she easily did because they were younger children, and had not reached the age of having developed a social conscience. She took them to the workshop, and they all armed themselves with saws. They announced their intention of cutting down all the fruit trees. I went, as usual, to dig in the garden. Ten minutes later Ansi came to me.

"What do we have to do to stop the chaos and have laws again?" she asked in a mild tone.

"I can't give you any advice," I replied.

"Can we call a *Schulgemeinde?*" she asked.

"Of course you can, only I won't come to it. We decided to have chaos."

She went away and I continued digging. In a short time she returned.

"We had a meeting of the children," she said, "and we voted to have a full *Schulgemeinde*. Will you come?"

"A full meeting?" said I. "Yes, I'll come."

In the meeting Ansi was serious, and we passed our laws in peace.

Total damage done during chaotic period—one clothes-pole sawn in two.

Here we see a girl, who has found pleasure for years in leading her school gangs against authority, plumping for law and order. In stirring up rebellion she was certainly doing something that she hated. She hated chaos. Underneath she was a law-abiding citizen.

What was certainly subjective about Ansi was her desire for power. She was happy only when she was directing others. In rebelling against her teacher she was trying to make herself more important than the teacher. She hated laws because she hated the power that made laws. Her natural desire was to be a tyrant. She identified herself with her caning mother, and was sadistic in her attitude to others. We can only conjecture that her hate of authority

was objectively a hate of mother's authority, and subjectively a hate of the bossing mother in herself. I remark, in passing, that I find such power cases much more difficult to cure than sex cases. One can comparatively easily track down the incidents and teachings that give a child a bad conscience about sex, but to track down the thousands of incidents and teachings that made a child a sadistic power person is very difficult indeed.

I think of one of my failures. In Germany a Slav girl of thirteen was sent to me. She hated her father intensely. For six months that girl made my school life a little hell. She attacked me in *Schulgemeinden*, and on one occasion carried a motion that I be put out of the school on the ground that I was useless. I had three days off, and was beginning to enjoy myself writing a book when unfortunately the *Schulgemeinde* had another meeting and voted (one dissentient of course) that I should be asked to return. She was always saying, "I won't have any *Hauptperson* (boss) in the school." She was a power person with a tremendous ego.

When she left (I had to tell her mother that I could not cure her) I shook hands with her.

"Well," I said pleasantly, "I didn't help you much, did I?"

"Do you know why?" she said, with a dry smile. "I'll tell you. The first day I came to your school I was making a box, and you said I was using too many nails. From that moment I knew that you were just like every other schoolmaster in the world—a boss. From that moment you could not possibly help me."

"You are right," I said. "Good-bye."

I think now that hate may be more often thwarted power than thwarted love. The hate that this girl, Maroslava, radiated was a hate that one could feel. Ansi's voice was full of harsh hate. To label it the "Masculine Protest," as Adler does, is to give a wrong impression. To seek power (and obtain it) is as much a feminine characteristic as a masculine. One may say that the woman seeks power over people, while the man seeks power over material. Maroslava and Ansi seek power over people. Theirs is the "Feminine Protest."

CHAPTER VII

INFERIORITY AND PHANTASY

I HAVE already hinted at the circumstances which give a child a sense of inferiority. He sees grown-ups do things that he cannot or is not permitted to do. My boy pupils delight in soaping their faces when I am shaving. The desire to smoke is mainly a wish to be grown up. In the contest between the two schools of psychology, Freud and Adler, loosely spoken of as the sex school and the power school, I am inclined to see much of value in Adler. The wish to have father's power seems to me to be at least as strong as the wish to have father's wife. In little Billie's wish to have a phallus bigger than father's I see no sex whatever. To-day I have a pupil whose ambition is to be able to urinate over a house. The phallus means power

in urinating, not in propagating. The child of seven has no knowledge of propagation. To say that he knows it unconsciously or by instinct does not help in treating a case psychologically.

I admit that the phallus has much to do with inferiority. Small boys are often ashamed of the size of their phallus; girls often feel inferior because they lack a phallus. I am inclined to think that its importance as a power symbol is mainly due to the mystery and taboo associated with it by moral education. Repressed thoughts about it come out as phantasies. The mysterious thing that is guarded so carefully by mother and nurse takes on an importance that is fanciful. Its importance is exaggerated. We see this in stories that are pure phantasies of the wonderful power of the phallus. Tom Thumb is a well-known one; Aladdin's lamp is perhaps the most interesting; Aladdin rubs his lamp (masturbation) and all the pleasures of the world come to him. Similarly children have phantasies which make faeces of great importance.

The phantasy is always egoistic. It is a story with the dreamer as hero or heroine. It is the story of the world as it ought to be. The world we adults enter through a whisky glass, or through the pages of a novel, or through the doors of a cinema is the world that the child enters through the door of phantasy. Phantasy is always an escape from reality. The world of phantasy is the world of wish-fulfilment. It has no boundaries; everything is possible there. The lunatic goes there and remains; the normal man goes there and comes back. It is a more attractive world than the dream world. In dreams we have nightmares, but in phantasies we have a certain control, and we phantasy only that that pleases the ego.

A Jewish girl came to my school in Germany. She was ten years old, and had night fears. She feared to be late for her school. She brought a huge bag of books to school the first day, sat down at a table and began to work out dull sums of the old type—Divide 4563207867 by 4379. For three days she worked at these sums. I asked her if she

liked doing sums like that, and got a timid *Ja* for answer. On the fourth day I looked at her as she continued her miserable counting.

"Do you really like doing these sums?" I asked.

She burst into tears, and I quietly took the book and threw it to the other end of the room.

"This is a free school," I said. "You can do exactly what you like."

She began to look happier, and whistled the whole day. She did no work; she just whistled. Months later I was out ski-ing one afternoon. I went through a wood and heard a voice. Then I saw Slovia. She had taken off her skis, and was walking through the snow, laughing and talking. She was obviously taking the part of various actors. She did not see me as she passed by. Next morning I told her I had heard her talking in the wood. She got confused, and rushed out of the room. In the afternoon she hung near my door, and at last she came in and said, "It is very difficult to tell you what I was doing, but I think I can tell you now."

It was a wonderful story. For years she had lived in a dream village which she called Grunwald. She showed me maps and plans. She knew everyone in the village, and what I had heard had been a conversation between two boys, Hans and Helmuth. It took me a few weeks to discover what was at the back of her phantasy. She was an only child and had few playmates. She created a village of playmates. The key to the phantasy was given when she told me that Helmuth had been beaten severely by the gamekeeper for trespassing in the *Schonung* (German for: Young plantation). This led her to mention the plantation represented by newly arrived pubic hairs. Then came a story of a man who had touched her sexually. Helmuth I took to represent this man who had trespassed in the *Schonung*, and also her hand in masturbation. I decided to break the phantasy by telling her what lay behind it. For two days she went about looking wretched.

"I tried to go back to Grunwald last night," she said to me, weeping bitterly, "and I

couldn't. You have spoiled the thing I liked best in life."

Ten days later one of my staff said to me: "What's happened to Slovia? She sings all day, and she is becoming very pretty."

She had miraculously become pretty. She had suddenly begun to take an interest in everything. She asked for lessons and learned them; she took up painting and turned out some good designs. In short she got into touch with reality. Her sex experience and her loneliness had forced her to seek a new world where there was no temptation and no bad man—and yet Helmuth went trespassing in her heaven.

Slovia's phantasy may be primarily a sexual one, but there are phantasies that are not primarily sexual. One girl used to daydream of herself as a fine actress. Crowds recalled her sixteen times. Jim, the boy who flies into fits of temper, tells me phantasies of urinating and defecating. He is using sex in terms of power. Another little boy of nine spins long phantasies mostly about trains. He is always the driver, and

usually the King and Queen (father and mother) are passengers. Little Charlie, our infant, has lots of aeroplanes and motor cars. Jim has a rich uncle who has presented him with a Rolls-Royce, boy's size, petrol-driven, but doesn't need a license. Two days ago I found Jim and three other boys dressing up in waterproofs. They were going away very far, but they would not tell me where. I discovered by wily means that they were walking to a railway station four miles away. Jim's uncle had sent the car to this station, and they were to drive back.

I thought of the bitter disappointment of walking four miles through mud to find a motor-car that existed only in Jim's imagination, and I decided to try to prevent the expedition. I pointed out that they would miss lunch. Jim, who appeared ill at ease, cried: "We don't want to miss our lunch." My house mother suddenly thought of a compensation, and offered to take them to the cinema instead. They hastily took off their waterproofs. I fancy that Jim was very much relieved, for the uncle who presented

the car is a phantastic uncle who never existed.

Here we have a phantasy that has nothing to do with sex. Since his arrival Jim has been impressing the other boys in this way. For days the group of boys stood and watched the approaches to Lyme Harbour. Jim had told them of another uncle who owned two liners. The other boys had persuaded Jim to write to this uncle asking him to present them with a motor boat. They expected to see the liner towing their boat into harbour. Thus Jim finds his superiority. He is a poor, wee chap who was boarded out with common folks, and he compensates for his inferiority by phantasying.

To destroy all phantasies would be to make life a dull thing. Every act of creation must be preceded by a phantasy. Phantasy must have built St. Paul's before Wren laid a stone. The phantasy worth keeping is the one that can be carried out in reality. The other kind, the flight phantasies, should be broken if possible. They keep the child back. In any school the so-called dunces are usually those

children who live most in phantasy. How can a boy have an interest in mathematics when he is expecting an uncle to send him a Rolls Royce?

I am continually having acrimonious discussions with mothers and fathers about reading and writing. A mother writes: "My boy must be able to fit into society. He must earn his living. You must force him to learn to read . . . ." My reply is generally as follows: "Your child lives in a world of phantasy. It will take me possibly a year to break that world in two. To ask him to read now is to commit a crime against the child. Until he has lived out his interest in his phantasy world he cannot possibly have a scrap of interest to give to reading."

Oh, yes, I could take the boy into my room and say sternly: "Put all this nonsense about uncles and motor-cars out of your head. It is all a made up story, and you know it. To-morrow morning you take a reading lesson or you'll know the reason why."

That would be the sin against the Holy Ghost. To break a child's phantasy before

the child can put something in its place is a crime. The best way is to encourage the child to talk about the phantasy. In nine cases out of ten he or she will slowly lose interest in it. Only on a special occasion, where, for example, a phantasy has persisted for years, can one dare to break a phantasy rudely.

I have said that there must be something to put in place of the phantasy. To be at all healthy every child and every adult should have at least one province in which he or she can be superior. In school classrooms the methods of gaining superiority are confined to two—to be at the top of the class, and to be able to punch the head of the boy at the bottom of the class. The latter is the more enticing way of being superior. The extraverted type of child finds superiority easily and happily. It is the introverted child who flees into phantasy to find superiority. In the world of reality he has no superiority. He cannot fight, play games, act, sing, dance, shout, but in his own world of phantasy he may be the heavy-weight

champion of the world. To find superiority is a vital necessity to every human. I think it is Barrie who remarks that the most interesting piece of literature is your own name in print. The ego must be exalted. Society, knowing that the greatest punishment in the world is the abolition of the rights of the ego, has evolved a prison system that abolishes a man's name and gives him a number. Prisoners are not allowed to talk to each other; they have no opportunity of exhibiting themselves in any way. A system that deprives a man of ego and sex is in itself a diabolical system.

And our classrooms are not unlike prisons. To make children sit silent on benches for six hours a day is to rob them of their first right—self expression. Only the so-called clever ones, the ones who win school prizes and become railway porters later, manage to show off. In many homes the child's ego is suppressed by the parents' treating the child as an eternal infant. I see girls of fourteen who are not trusted by their parents to light a fire. Parents, with the

best of intention, keep back responsibility from the child.

"You must take your mac, dear; I am sure it is going to rain."

"Now don't go near the railway!"

"Have you washed your face?"

When a new pupil came to my school her mother told me that her daughter was very dirty in habits; that she had to tell her ten times a day to wash. From the day following her arrival she took a cold bath every morning and at least two hot ones a week. She was always clean in face and hands. Her lack of cleanliness at home (if it did not exist only in the mother's imagination) was due to her being treated as a baby.

Children should be allowed almost infinite responsibility. Montessori infants carry tureens full of hot soup. My youngest pupil, aged seven, uses all sorts of tools—chisels, saws, axes, knives. I cut my fingers oftener than he does. Children of seven and eight can use a typewriter without destroying it. I grant that there are limits. I should not give a child of eight a petrol blow-lamp to

light, at least not in a house. Yet an American teacher told me how he used to camp out with his boys, and how boys of eleven did their share of shooting animals for food.

The sad truth is that adults are more often concerned for the safety of materials than for the safety of children. Here we come across the psychological fact that we identify ourselves with our material possessions. Not many men care to lend a new cycle. It is difficult to lend a friend an article of clothing. There is the proverbial joke about lending anyone your toothbrush. There is nothing against lending a toothbrush if one thinks of a toothbrush as an article that can be washed and sterilised. We do not feel disgust when a dentist uses on our mouths a tool that has been in a thousand mouths. Nor do we object to restaurant forks because they have been used by others. The disgust at the idea of lending one's toothbrush is an emotional disgust. The toothbrush has become a part of oneself. Similarly a man's piano, carpenter's tools, clothes—a hundred things—have become part of himself. To see a plane

being misused is to feel a personal hurt. It would appear that very often the love for possessions is greater than the love for children. Every "Leave that alone!" is a preferring of the article to the child. The child is a nuisance because his wishes conflict with the egoistic wishes of the parent. I write as a sympathiser with the parent. Not long ago three little boys borrowed my electric torch (cost 18*s*. and is a dynamo torch). They began to see what was in it and ruined it. To say that I enjoyed their exploration would be to lie. I was annoyed in spite of the fact that I suspected the psychological meaning of the act of destruction (father's torch—father's phallus). One of my day-dreams is that I have a millionaire's son as pupil. I allow him to try all sorts of elaborate experiments—at his father's expense.

To give a neurotic child freedom is an expensive business, but most children are not neurotic. No healthy child wants to hammer nails into the grand piano. This brings to my mind a question that crops up everywhere I lecture.

"What would you do if a boy started to hammer nails into the grand piano?"

Nowadays I am so expert that I can often spot the person who is going to ask the question. She generally sits in the front seat and shakes her head disapprovingly at times during the lecture.

The best answer to the question is given in a sentence Mrs. Edwin Muir once used in conversation.

"It doesn't matter what you do to a child if your attitude to children is right," she said.

It doesn't matter if you take the child away from the piano so long as you don't give the child a conscience about hammering nails. That is, so long as you do not introduce the moral element of right and wrong. It is the use of words like "Naughty" or "Bad"! or "Dirty"! that does harm. If one's motto is: I must not give the child a conscience, one can do the minimum of harm. To throw a book at a boy with a "Get out! I am busy!" is quite harmless if the boy does not fear you. But to take him into your study an hour

after the event, and to speak earnestly to him about his behaviour is harmful.

To return to the young hammerer. Of course he ought to have wood to hammer nails into. Every child has a right to the tools by which he can express himself. And the tools should be his very own. The child has the same pride in possessions that the adult has. I found in my school workshop that tools were badly used, and I guessed that the reason was that they belonged to no one. I wrote to the parents suggesting that each child should bring his or her own cutting tools—chisels, planes. Two boys returned this term with beautiful tools. They keep them in excellent condition, and they work with more care than formerly. Incidentally the arrival of the tool chest brought trouble into the school. The children whose fathers could not afford to buy good tools became jealous, and for three weeks were anti-social. One boy who knows all about the handling of tools borrowed a plane from the lucky boys. He took out the iron by hammering the cutting edge, and of course spoiled it. He

told me that he had forgotten how to take an iron out. Whether conscious or unconscious the act was one of jealousy.

It is impossible to give each child a room, but each child should have a corner with which he can do what he likes. In my schoolroom each pupil has a table and a corner, and each child decorates his or her corner with joy. In Hellerau (near Dresden) the children decorated the walls with colour, and the room was one mass of design. One part was done by a Jugo Slav, then came English, Belgian, Norwegian, Russian, German, Hungarian. Visitors were given the game of guessing the nationality of the pupil by the wall design over his or her table. The Norwegian girl used only cold colours, and the German pupils drew stiff, conventional designs. The English contingent went in for very futuristic designs. I often think of that room, for I loved it.

Education by doing: self-expression: the phrases are threadbare. But how much of education is real doing, real self-expression? Handwork is too often a making of a pen-tray

under the trade eye of an expert. The Montessori system, wonderful as it is, is an artificial way of making the child learn by doing. It has nothing creative about it. In the home the child is always being taught. There is always at least one ungrown-up grown-up in a home who rushes to show Tommy how his new engine works. There is always someone by to lift the baby up on to a chair when he wants to examine something on the wall. And every time we lift the baby up, and every time we show Tommy how his engine winds up we are stealing from the child the joy of life—that of discovery, of overcoming. Worse, we make him come to believe that he is inferior.

CHAPTER VIII

JEALOUSY

THE psychology of jealousy is still a problem. Stekel told me of cases he had had where jealousy was homosexual. Mr. X, engaged to Miss Y, was exceedingly jealous when she went out with Mr. Z. The unconscious reason was that Mr. X was homosexual without knowing it, and he was jealous because his fiancée was his rival for the love of Mr. Z. I mention this to show how complicated a subject jealousy is.

I am inclined to think that jealousy has more to do with power than it has to do with sex. Jealousy is the reaction following an injured ego. "I am not first. I am not the favoured one. I am placed in a position of inferiority."

This certainly is the psychology of the jealousy we find among say, professional singers and comedians. (In my student days I used to make friends with stage comedians by the simple method of saying that the other comedian in the cast was rotten).

Again, jealousy arises from the sense of possession. If sexual love were an annihilation of self, or a transcendence of self, a man would rejoice when he saw his girl kiss another man. He would rejoice to see her happy. But sexual love has much of bicycle love in it; it is possessive, just as love for a new cycle is. It is the man with strong possessive instinct who commits a crime of jealousy. By the way, it has been often said that a jealous man does not usually shoot the rival who runs away with his wife; he shoots the wife. I have read a theory about this, that he strikes down the woman because he is afraid of the man. It is much more probable that Stekel's idea applies to such crimes: the man shoots the real rival—the woman. Again he may kill the woman to put his possession

beyond the reach of touch, just as a mother rabbit will eat her young ones if people handle them too much.

In children I find strong jealousy. I often wonder if I can go on living in my school. I spend the morning as doctor getting the new pupils to tell me about themselves. Naturally I become father to each, and I get all the love and hate that belong to the real father and mother transferred on to my back. In the evening I am playmate, and when we play games the new pupils fight to be on my side. They look daggers at each other if I smile on one. My position is one that requires great tact—and self sacrifice. Psychological specialists have told me again and again that you cannot treat patients and live with them. I once went holidaying with a psycho-analyst. He took two patients with him—two women. In two days the situation was impossible; they weren't on speaking terms with each other. He had to send them away. Yet in my case I see no way out. I am running a school for difficult children. Each child needs treatment, at least at first.

But then there are the others who are happy, healthy children who are treated only by being allowed freedom to forge their own lives. I am interested in them; I enjoy playing with them, working with them. Last term I used to take little Ena on my knee. This term I dare not. I tried once, but a new adolescent girl at once demanded that she should take Ena's place. Verily it is a hard life.

The infant ego is a Brand; it will have All or Nothing. It cannot share. Every new pupil in my school has three months of hate from the old pupils. The child's first reaction to a new arrival in the family is a hate reaction. Mother has eyes only for the newcomer. The baby sleeps with mother, takes up all mother's attention. The hate is often compensated for by an excess of tenderness. I find that it is the older child in a family who hates most. The younger child has never known what it is to be king in the house. When I come to think of it I see that my worst cases of neurosis are either only children or eldest sons and daughters.

Parents unwittingly feed the hate of an older child. "Why, Tom, your young brother wouldn't make such a fuss about a cut finger." I remember when I was a boy another boy was always held up as an example to me. He was a marvellous scholar; was never known to be anywhere but at the top of the class; took all prizes in a canter. He died. I recall his funeral as being rather a pleasant affair.

The things I fear most in my work are the letters parents write to the children. Not very long ago I had to write to a father—"Please do not write to your son. Every time a letter comes from you he goes bad."

The father did not answer me, but he ceased to write to his son. About two months later I saw the boy receive a letter from his father. I was annoyed, but said nothing. That night about twelve I heard awful screams from his bedroom. I rushed along and was in time to save our kitten from strangulation. Next day I went to his room to look for the letter. I found it "You will be glad to hear," ran a sentence, "that

Tom (younger brother) had his birthday last Monday, and Auntie Lizzie gave him a kitten."

This was the boy who killed "A SNail." Now I am refusing all cases that have a homicidal trait. They interest me much, but one requires a special school for them. The more normal children suffer when one mixes normal and pathological cases. The difficulty is to know what a child is before he comes. A father will write: "My boy is being pushed too hard in his lessons at school, and I want to send him to your school.' When the boy arrives I find that he is a thief and a dozen other things. New parents tell about ten per cent of what they know of their children.

The phantasies that arise from jealousy know no bounds in criminality. The jealous child kills off his rivals in phantasy. From Hellerau two brothers had to travel home to England. The elder got into a state of fear. "I'm frightened I lose Fred on the way," he kept on saying. He was afraid that his day-dreams would come true. A

girl pupil joyed in pulling other pupils under the water in swimming. She had a phobia about water. Although a good swimmer she never went beyond her depth. She had drowned so many rivals that she feared poetic justice . . . . "As a punishment for my thoughts I'll be drowned." Little Albert gets into a state of terror when he stands on the beach and watches father swimming. He is afraid because he has so often wished for father's death; he is afraid of his guilty conscience. It is not shocking to realise that a child kills people in phantasy when we think that death to a child is simply getting out of the way.

"No," said a boy of eleven to me, referring to his younger brother, "no, I wouldn't exactly like him to die, but if he went away a long, long journey to India or somewhere and came back when he was a man I'd like that."

I am seeing much jealousy at present. Jim, aged eight, the latest arrival, has a habit of kissing everyone he meets. His kisses are more like sucking than kissing. I came to

the idea that Jim has never got over his infantile interest in sucking. I went out and bought a feeding bottle. Jim has his bottle every night when he goes to bed. The other boys, who at first went into screams of derisive laughter (hiding their interest in bottles), are now jealous of Jim. Two of them are demanding bottles. Jim has suddenly become the substitute for the little brother who long ago got the monopoly of mother's breast. They shall have their bottles. The fact that they want them shows that they still retain their interest in sucking. The whole idea of my school is release; is the living out of an interest. Naturally we cannot allow a child to live out his interest in murder. There analysis comes in; the child is shown what lies behind his anti-social interests, and the relating of the incidents and phantasies that brought the murder wish into being uses up the interest just as well as expression of the interest in action would do.

Teachers often come up against the jealousy of parents. I have lost pupils more than

once because the parents were jealous of the child's affection for the school and me. It is understandable. In a free school the children are allowed to do exactly what they like so long as they do not offend the social laws which are made by staff and pupils in meetings. They go home to the old laws—not to get muddy, not to say cheeky words, to be polite to grandma. Often the child does not want to go home for holidays. It is natural for the parents to be jealous.

I have parents now who do not get jealous, but they are people who treat their children at home as I treat them in the school. They believe in children and give them freedom to be themselves. The children delight in going home. I sometimes think that strict schools owe part of their popularity to the fact that the pupils delight in going home for holidays. Parents see in the happy faces of their children love of home, whereas it is just as often hate of school.

There need be no rivalry between parent and teacher. If the parent turns the child's love into hate by arbitrary orders and rules

he must expect the child to seek love elsewhere. The truth, of course, is that no child loves his teacher. His teacher is merely a father or mother surrogate. It is the love for parents that is showered on the teacher—but only when teacher is easier to love than father is. The children do not love me so much as my non-interference in their affairs. I am the father they day-dreamed about when the real father shouted: "Stop that row!" I never demand good manners nor polite language; I never ask if faces have been washed; I never ask for obedience or respect or honour. In short I treat children with the dignity that adults expect to be treated with. After all the parent cannot compete with me. His work is to earn an income for his family; my work is to study children and to give all my time and interest to children. If parents refuse to study child psychology they must expect to be left behind. And parents are left behind. One boy of ten said to me: "My people aren't up-to-date, you know. I'm not free at home like I am here. When I go home I'm going to teach my father and

mother." I suppose he carried out his threat, for he was sent to another school.

It is natural that we adults should be left behind. We have not been very successful. Our education, politics and economics led to the Great War; our medicine has not done away with disease; our religion has not abolished usury and robbery; our boasted humanitarianism still allows public opinion to approve of the barbaric "sport" of fox-hunting (in which Churchmen join). The advances of the age are advances in mechanism—wireless, telephones, aeroplanes. New world wars will certainly come, for the world's social conscience is yet primitive.

Education, so called, does not help us. Call a committee of university graduates and farmers and dustmen; ask it to consider some problem of moment to society—the abolition of war, or the substitution of a scientific code in place of our present antiquated and cruel criminal code. No honest man will contend that the university men will have better plans and ideas than the farmers and dustmen.

I see only one way in education: to say boldly that we adults do not know what education is; to confess that we do not know what is best for a child because we do not know where a child is going. Educationists with schemes of life and philosophy are humbugs. The other day a gentleman wrote a letter to the *Spectator* recommending me to study the work of Dr. Rudolf Steiner, the German educationist. This was because I claimed to have no idea of what education is, while, according to the correspondent, Dr. Steiner has a complete knowledge of the past and future of mankind. For three years in Germany I heard of Dr. Steiner, and once I saw his pupils give a demonstration. My point in replying to the letter was that because Steiner's philosophy does not appear finally right to me I cannot see how to be sure that it is right for children. Steiner is a more important man than I am, but so is Bernard Shaw, so is Ramsay Macdonald. The relative importance of each of us is of no importance in education. Fifty years hence they and I will be dead as mutton. The only

thing of importance is the child, the new generation. Steiner will show it where to go. I say that Steiner does not know where it is going. And parents do not know. This eternal imposition on children of adult conceptions and values is the great sin against childhood. To mould a child's character is a work for a god. The parent sees in the child his own image; the child is psychically part of the parent. The law gives the parent great powers over the child. A mother and father can beat their child, give it terrors, make its life miserable. The law can interfere if too much bodily damage is done; it cannot interfere at all however much the psychical damage done. The parent has the legal right to say: I shall mould my child thus! The parent is God, and a jealous God. And the tragedy is that the parent is always acting for the best.

My case against the parent is that he will not learn. I grant that I cannot write dispassionately, for I have a grievance against the parent. My work is mostly correcting parental mistakes. We all make mistakes

every day; I have sympathy with the parents who honestly see the mistakes they have made in the past and who try to learn how best to treat the child. But there is the other kind of parent, the jealous one. I write to a father thus: "It is fatal for you to criticise your boy in any way. Do not rage at him, above all never punish him." And when that father meets his son at the station when the boy comes home for a vacation, the first thing he says to him is: "Keep your head up, man. Don't slouch!" Difficult children are being held back by their parents. The parents, strangely enough, would rather stick to a code that is useless and dangerous than try to adapt themselves to the child.

Note: Dr. Steiner has died since the above words were written.

CHAPTER IX

THE LAZY CHILD

LAZINESS does not exist. What is called laziness is either lack of interest or lack of health. I have never yet seen a lazy child. A healthy child cannot be idle; he must be doing something all day long. But I have known a healthy lad who was known as a lazy fellow—at staff meetings when the Mathematics teacher was reporting progress. Mathematics did not interest him, but the school code demanded that he should learn mathematics. I have seen a girl weep nightly over her geometry. Her mother wanted her to go to the university, but the girl's whole soul was artistic. I was delighted to hear lately that she failed in the London Matric. for the seventh time.

Possibly the mother will now allow her to go on the stage that she longs for.

It is time that we were challenging the school's notion of work. It is taken for granted that every child should learn mathematics, history, geography, some science, a little art, literature. It is time that we realised that the average child is not interested in these subjects. I prove this with every new pupil. When told that the school is free, every new pupil cries: "Hurrah! You won't catch me doing dull maths. and things" every time.

A study of several free children will be of value.

Winifred, aged thirteen, came to me when the school was in Germany; came from a school with subjects. She told me that she hated all subjects, and shouted with joy when I told her she was free to do exactly as she liked.

"You don't even have to come to school if you don't want to," I said.

She set herself out to have a good time, and she had—for a few weeks. Then I noticed that she was bored.

"Teach me something," she said to me one day; "I'm bored stiff."

"Right ho!" I said cheerfully, "what do you want to learn?"

"I don't know," she said.

"And I don't either," said I, and left her.

Months passed. Then she came to me again.

"I am going to pass the London Matric.," she said, "and I want lessons from you."

Every morning she worked with me and other teachers—worked well. She confessed that the subjects did not interest her much, but the aim did interest her. Winifred found herself by being thrown on to herself.

Tom, aged eight, was another Englander who came to Germany. We often speak laughingly of his first weeks. He was continually opening my door and asking: "By the way—what'll I do?" No one would tell him what to do. Six months later if you wanted to find Tom you went to his bedroom. There you always found him in a sea of paper sheets. He spent hours making maps. One day a professor from the university in Vienna

visited the school. I noticed that he was asking Tom many questions. Later the professor came to me and said: "I tried to examine that boy on geography, and he talked of places I never heard of."

Derrick, now twelve, my first pupil ("David" in *A Dominie Abroad*) learns everything. When he had chicken-pox I found him sitting up in bed working simple equation problems for amusement.

But I must also mention the failures.

Barbel, Swedish, fifteen, came to the school. She was about a year with me, but in that time she found no work that interested her. She came too late. For ten years teachers had been making up her mind for her. She had lost all initiative and was bored. Luckily she was rich and had the promise of a lady's life.

I had two Jugo Slavs, sisters, eleven and fourteen. When they came they could not speak German. The school failed to interest them. They spent most of their time making rude remarks about me in Croatian An unkind friend used to translate for me.

Success would have been miraculous in this case, for the only common speech we had was art and music. I was very glad when the mother came for them.

Speaking generally, the method is absolutely sure with children under twelve. Children over twelve take a long time to recover from a spoon-fed education.

It is interesting to know that free children go to mathematics; that they find joy in geography, in history. One would be tempted to cry: "That proves that the study of subjects in schools is right!"—if it were not for the fact that free children cull from "subjects" only that which interests them. They spend more time at other interests—gardening, wood and metal work, painting, reading fiction (possibly the highroad to knowledge with most of us), acting, playing out phantasies. Education is not "a preparation for life." Education is living. The aim of life is to find happiness, that is interest.

I read recently that if a couple dance every dance on an evening programme they walk twenty-five miles. There is little or no

fatigue because there is pleasure all the time—assuming that their steps agree. So is it with a child. The "lazy" boy in class will run miles during an afternoon's football. Schools should simply make the child's life a game at ball. I do not mean that the child should have a path of roses. Making it all easy for the child is fatal to the child's character. But life itself presents so many difficulties that the artificially-made difficulties which we present to children are unnecessary.

I believe that to impose anything by authority is wrong. The child should not do anything until he come to the opinion, his own opinion, that it should be done. I have a large garden. A gang of little boys and girls would be of great assistance during weeding time. To command work from them is possible, but these children of eight, nine, and ten have not come to the opinion that weeding is necessary. Here I rose from my desk and went to a group of small boys.

"Anyone help me do some weeding?" I asked.

They all refused. I asked why. "Too dull!" "Let them grow." "Too busy with this Cross-Word." "Hate gardening."

I, too, find weeding dull. I, too, like to tackle a Cross-Word. I have reached the communal stage; the garden must grow food. I do not argue with these small boys. They must grow to communal life. And to be quite fair to them: what concern is it to them? It is my garden; I get the pride in seeing the peas come through the soil. I save money on greengrocers' bills. In short, the garden touches my self-interest. The only possible way would be for me to hire the boys at so much an hour. Then we should be on the same basis.

So I come back to egoism. Interest is egoistic. Maud, aged fourteen, often helps me in the garden, although she declares that she hates gardening. But she does not hate me; she weeds to be beside me. When Derrick volunteers to help me with the weeding I know that he is going to renew his request for a pocket-knife of mine that he covets.

To toil for a reward is tolerable, but the reward ought to be in the work. It is when one thinks of the intolerable jobs of the world that one scorns the idea of progress and civilisation. Men shovelling coal, digging coal, fitting nut 58 to bolt 58 on a cheap auto, digging drains, adding figures—the world is full of jobs that have no intrinsic interest or pleasure. And we seem to be adapting our schools to this dullness in life. People are always saying to me: "But how will those free children ever adapt themselves to the drudgery of life?" I hope that these free children will be pioneers in abolishing the drudgery of life. We have been so busy trying to prepare the child for society that we have had no time to prepare society for the child. Until society can find a way to do all ugly toil mechanically it should gratefully pay every miner and every drain-digger a thousand a year—and give them a four hours' day.

CHAPTER X

RELIGION

THE most neurotic children are those who have had a religious upbringing. It is the religious upbringing that gives to sex an exaggerated importance. Sex becomes the devil that will lead one away from heaven. The child uses sex as a means of sinning, and then immediately uses religion as a means of repentance.

Religious instruction is fatal to the child's psyche, for religions of all kinds accept the idea of original sin. All try to lead upwards; all hate the flesh; all aspire to the spirit. And all religions give to the child a feeling of self-dissatisfaction. As a boy in Scotland I was taught from my earliest years that I was in danger of hell fire. I have often found comfort in the thought that the hell-

fire religion is out-of-date. Last week, however, a boy of good English middle-class parentage came to school. Age nine. I write down my conversation with him.

"Who is God?"

"Don't know, but if you're good you go to heaven, and if you're bad you go to hell."

"And what sort of a place is hell?"

"All dark. The devil is the bad one."

"I see. And what sort of people go to hell?"

"Bad people, them that swear and steal things and murder people."

When are we to waken up to the absurdity of teaching children stuff like that? When I asked the boy to describe God to me he said that he had no idea of God's appearance. But, he assured me, he loved God. Now I know for a fact that a boy of nine does not really love anyone. Love to him means love shown to him by others. When he says that he loves a God whom he cannot describe and whom he never saw he is merely using a meaningless, conventional tag. The real

truth is that he fears God. Religion to a child simply means fear. God is a mighty man with holes in his eyelids; He can see you wherever you are. To a child this often means that God can see what is being done under the bed-clothes. And to introduce fear into a child's life is the worst of all crimes. For ever the child says Nay to life; for ever is he an inferior; for ever a coward. Religion makes cowards of us all.

To explain away religion, to say that it is "nothing but" such-and-such is to be fatuous. The fact that religion exists proves that there is in man a force that seeks religion. All that anyone can dare to question is the merit of the forms religion takes. Christianity, thanks to St. Paul mostly, has taken the line of sheep and goats, heaven and hell. God became an object of fear.

The trouble is to know where religion ends and phantasy begins. The stern God who rewards you with harps or burns you with fire obviously belongs to phantasy and not to religion. He is the God that man made in his own image. He is the super-projection.

Man, failing to attain to what his idealism prompted, projected what he called the "good" in himself, and placed the projection in the skies. So also did he personify his "evil" and place the personification in the depths of hell. God became a wish-fulfilment: Satan a fear fulfilment. Then good and evil became mixed up with pleasure and pain. What gave pleasure came to signify what was evil. Thus playing cards and theatres and dancing came to belong to the devil. To be religious was to be joyless. To-day the stiff "Sunday clothes" of provincial towns testify to the joylessness of religion. Sacred music is usually mournful in nature; the clergyman's intonation is monotonous and stilted. To be religious is usually to be and to look miserable. It is an effort, a duty to go to church. The cinema is more attractive to youth and age; a fox-trot more enticing than a prayer-meeting. Only a few Salvation Army officers succeed in looking as if they enjoyed their singing of hymns and shouting of prayers. The average clergyman is as dull as his attire.

As an organisation the church is feeble. It does nothing to stop wars; it does nothing to temper our barbarous criminal code; it never takes sides against the profiteer. The only explanation is that the church has outlived its religion. The men who built Cologne Cathedral had a religion that meant something to them, but the majority of churchgoers to-day lack spiritual inspiration and belief. The story of Christianity in recent years is a sad one. It wavered about Jonah, then about the miracles, then it allowed that hell was metaphorical. A religion that hesitates is lost. Christianity, or rather Paulianity has had its day. We are nearly all doubters in one way or another. We simply don't know what is beyond the grave. Some of us do not very much care.

The people who doubt the teachings of Christianity seem to have no hesitation in giving their children ideas and beliefs that adults question. How many mothers believe in a literal fiery hell, a golden heaven of harps, a stern God who divides the just from the unjust? How many? A few fanatics only.

Yet unbelieving mothers are in thousands warping their children's souls by dishing up the antiquated, primitive stories. No child should be taught religion. He should be left entirely free to make up his mind when he reaches years of choice. Religions are no more eternal than are nations. A religion has a birth, youth, age, and death. The new generation cannot accept the old religion. When the new religion comes it will refute the idea of man's being born of sin. It will praise God by making man happy. I recall a saying of Homer Lane, a great psychologist. Speaking of prayer he said: "Suppose you were a door-keeper in Selfridges, and suppose that every day at a certain hour you went up to Gordon Selfridge's office and bowed before him and told him what a wonderful man he was. Selfridge would rightly reply: 'You jolly well go and show your appreciation of me by attending to your door-keeping.' That is the situation of the churchgoer. He spends so much time telling God how worshipful He is that he has no time to do God's work in the world."

The new religion will recognise in St. Paul a dull killjoy, and it will return to Jesus Christ, return with a new orientation and interest. For to the new religion Christ's death will be of little moment. His life will be of the greatest moment. The death to save sinners will have no meaning, for the new religion will refuse to believe in original sin. Man never fell; he never required salvation. But he required and requires love and charity and understanding.

Youth must rebel against our religion. Every day my newspaper tells me how dead our religion is. We flog, imprison, hang; we starve the poor; we arm for war. We do all those things that Christ told us not to do. If we had been real followers of Christ we should, in 1914, have said to Germany: "Do your worst, and we shall turn the other cheek." We should have won the war ultimately—say in the year 2,000. I am not arguing that we ought to have acted thus, but I am showing that as Christians we are humbugs and hypocrites. You cannot serve God and Mammon, or, to be modern, you

cannot go to church on Sunday and practice bayonet-fighting on Monday night. I know of no blasphemy so vile as that of the various churches which, during a war, contend that the Almighty is on this or that side. God cannot be Love and at the same time the patroniser of a gas attack. God is exploited by modern religions.

The new religion will refuse to use the antithesis: Body and Spirit. It will recognise that the Flesh is not sinful. It will know that a Sunday morning spent in swimming is more holy than one spent in singing hymns. It will find God on the meadows and not in the skies. The Devil will be dead and his death recognised. For there is no Devil. There is one God. "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me." What we call the Devil is God changed by interference from outside. Harold Jones, the fifteen-year-old boy who murdered two girls, was doing what a false religion had taught him to do . . . killing the sex that tempted him. True, his religion told him to kill the sex desires in himself, but he projected the temptation and killed objec-

tive sex with a knife. He hid one body in an attic, symbolically carried his dead sex to heaven. The natural, good thing, sex interest became, under moral teachings, the Devil. I believe that all murder could be traced to a good motive—if we had sympathetic eyes to see. Our criminal code to-day is a clear proof that our religion is dead. Christ invited those without sin among them to cast the first stone. Christ understood all and could forgive all. We have not the will to understand. Prison and the gallows are so easy to use. To spank is much easier than to understand. And we cite our religion as an excuse for our stupidity. Religion has its good and bad. Religion's heaven becomes parental praise; its hell parental punishment. God the father: father the god. No wonder that every little boy makes his father his God. Religion to-day is a gigantic Father-Complex. Christ was only a son, and in consequence the stern fatherly Paul elbowed Him out of the way. The new religion must go back to the Son. The Father belongs to yesterday, but the Son belongs to to-morrow. We must

return to Jesus, the Man of Love and Charity. Modern psychology is making towards the Son, for it is showing daily that the Father idea is iniquitous. The criminal code belongs to the Father: the new sympathetic understanding of the criminal belongs to the Son. Salvation is being preached more effectively by the young medical doctors than by the young clergymen.

I suddenly think that medicine has always been nearer to Christlikeness than has been the Church. Medicine never condemns or judges. The poor syphilitic patient is not told by the doctor to repent: he is told to use ointments. The man with delirium tremens is never lectured about his past life. The law and the church look to the past for precedents. They change but little. The curing of disease is always seeking new methods. Long after we are all dead the law will be made by the doctors of body and soul.

I appear to have wandered considerably from the subject of the difficult child, but the whole problem of religion is the most vital one for parents and educators. If we want to

keep the children healthy in soul we must guard against giving them any values whatever of good and bad, right and wrong. Every child has God in him. Our attempts to mould the child will turn the God into a devil. Children come to my school little devils, hating the world, destructive, unmannerly, lying, thieving, bad-tempered. In six months they are happy, healthy children who do no evil. And I am no genius; I am merely a man who refuses to guide the steps of children. I let them form their own values, and the values are invariably good and social. The religion that makes men good also makes men bad, but the religion known as Freedom makes all men good, for it destroys the conflict that makes men devils. To-day morality is nine parts repression. To-morrow morality will be expression of the God in each of us.

Christianity is a religion of extraversion. God is out with the human soul. Man cannot stand alone, and a Christ becomes necessary, a Christ on whom man can throw his evil self. Thus the converted man prays to Christ to

shield him from temptation; he casts his burden on the Lord. It is likely that the new religion will teach that man must bear his own burden, that Christ is within, not without. Instead of asking Christ to save him from his Crippen, the new youth will boldly face his own Crippen. The Christian represses his Crippen: the new youth will acknowledge his Crippen. For a Crippen is always a Christ repressed, and the Devil is only God disguised. Christianity believes in the Holy Trinity, but the new religion will believe in the Holy Unity. To face one's naked soul is to find a new religion, a religion that compels responsibility. To sin and be forgiven is easy, but to sin and bear the burden alone is difficult. The new generation will not believe in sin, but it will have the more difficult task of acting without hope of external exoneration. "Men like Gods," says Wells. Rather Men who *are* Gods. The new religion will require courage, much courage. Romanism, by allowing the individual to cast his cares on Mother Church, prevents the growth of courage. It encourages weakness;

it fortifies the least admirable trait of man—the irresponsibility that distinguishes any unit of a large crowd. When man discovers that God is not in the skies but on the earth, discovers that God is in the man, then he must acquire courage, for his judge is in himself. It will be an individual not a crowd religion. No Mother Church will offer a haven of refuge and repentance. Man will have to make himself Captain of his soul. To-day man cannot be Captain of his soul, for he knows only the surface layers of his soul. A young man once came to me for help. He was a street-corner preacher of Salvation, but his life was made wretched by an uncontrollable impulse to indulge in a disgusting perversion. His religion was real and his desire to be a pervert was real. He was two men in one. He could not be master of his soul because he did not recognise his soul. I sent him to a skilled psycho-analyst and never heard of him again. I can only guess that analysis forced him to recognise his perversion as a good thing in disguise. I hasten to add that I do not think for a moment

that psycho-analysis will give man a new religion, will lead him to be captain of his soul. It will pave the way only. Much more significant is the drift of the universal unconscious. The outcrop of the new psychology of the unconscious coincides with a general movement of the universal unconscious, rather is one expression of that movement. To-day the movement in its infancy challenges old values rather than creates new values; to-morrow the movement will begin to build up anew. To-day the melting-pot is full of education, religion, economics, morals. In Europe the new youth is seeking for a new education, a new religion, new economics, new morals. What is significant is that youth is examining itself. It does not pray for new things, for betterments; it throws the responsibility on to man. "God's in his Heaven. All's right with the world." But because God has been in his heaven all has been wrong with the world. Better to cry: "God's on his Earth. All's right with the world." Fundamentally the Great War came because man did not

understand his own being. Most human movements are blind gropings. Our national crowd cannot answer the question: "Why could we spend seven millions a day on war and we cannot spend that in a year on education?" Humanity suffers from a gigantic inferiority complex. It can think but it cannot will. The conventional answer to a difficult question—"God knows"—expresses the inferiority complex of mankind. If the world is to be saved from blindness we must recognise that we are gods. This we can do only through self-knowledge, for only self-knowledge will rid us of the fear of self that is expressed as inferiority. Self-knowledge is the precursor of the new religion. Christianity flourishes because man will not, cannot face his unconscious. Christianity makes the unconscious the devil and warns man to flee from its temptations. Make the unconscious conscious and Christianity has no function. Christ can never be destroyed; his life will always be of the greatest value in any new religion. Christ entered the tomb in order to live again. Man must enter the

tomb of introversion, of self-examination, in order to live again.

I recall discussing revues with a clergyman. He told me that he fled from the erotic appeal of a revue chorus to Jesus Christ. With Christ's help he lived a clean life. "But," he said, "temptation is a grand thing; it is by overcoming that we form character."

My answer to him was that his overcoming was only repression. The fact that his erotic desires persisted showed that he had not overcome them. I disagree with this idea that we form character by overcoming. We form character by facing things, by acknowledging things. To be erotically excited by a Beauty Chorus is quite unnatural. In a healthy man sexual desire would spring up only when he loved. More knowledge of self would have cured my clergyman friend of his too strong interest in chorus girls. Because his God was outside himself the man could not cure himself. He put the responsibility on Christ, not thinking that Christ would almost certainly have approved of chorus girls. To be good is not to overcome

temptation: to be good is to have no temptation. And we shall have no temptation when we learn to approve of all things. The Beauty Chorus was a temptation to the clergyman because he was afraid of his own sex desires. If he could have faced his desires and approved of them there would have been no further temptation for him in a theatre. Only by approving do we overcome—which is only another way of saying that love casteth out fear.

"He prayeth best who loveth best all things both great and small." Coleridge, the poet, thus expressed the new religion. He may have meant objective things, but his words apply to subjective things also. In the new religion man will pray best when he loves best all things great and small *in himself*.

CHAPTER XI

REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS

MORE than once I have alluded to the religious element in training children. Religion offers rewards and threatens punishments. Parents live up to their idea of God, and they reward and punish their children. They try honestly to be just, and they often convince themselves that they are punishing for the child's good. "This hurts me more than it hurts you," is not so much a lie as a pious self-deception.

Punishment is always an act of hate In the act of punishing the parent is hating the child—and the child realises it. The apparent tender love that a whipped child shows to its parent is not real love; it is an over-compensation for hate. A whipping drives a child into phantasy. "If father

were to die!" The phantasy immediately brings remorse—"I wanted father to die! What a sinner I am!" Remorse drives the child to father's knee in tenderness. Punishment gives many a child a neurotic span of life.

At question time in my lectures I have often had the old-timer type stand up and say; "My father used his slipper on me, and I don't regret it, sir! I would not have been what I am to-day if I had not been beaten." I never had the temerity to ask: "By the way, what exactly *are* you to-day?" One must remember that our religion and morality make punishment a quasi-attractive institution. For it salves the conscience. "I have paid the price!" Masochism is a common trait in human life. The desire to suffer is often a deep one. Naturally. "I have done those things that I ought not to have done. I am a sinner. I must pay for my sins." In abnormal cases we see people who regularly beat themselves in order to gain sexual excitement. Similarly the sadists beat others. The beating means that the patient

hates his body; he is trying literally to crucify the flesh. Most sadists and masochists have had a strong religious upbringing. I take it, however, that parents do not want to make their children sick sadists and masochists. But how can the parent tell what the beatings are going to produce? I know of one man who spent years in misery because of early beatings for being unclean in habits. He suffered from agoraphobia, that is a phobia of exposed places. He could not cross a street, could not walk alone. It took four years of analysis to cure him.

Punishment makes illness. To say that it does not always make illness is to evade the issue. We do not know how the punishment will re-act in later years. Many an exhibitionist arrested for indecent exposure is the victim of early punishments for childish sexual habits. And punishment arouses hate. The punished child grows into a punishing father or mother, and the cycle of hate goes down the years.

That punishment is unnecessary I know from experience. I never punish a child,

never have any temptation to punish a child. Recently I said to a new pupil, a boy: "You are doing all these silly tricks merely to get me to whack you, for your life has been one long whacking. But you are wasting time. I won't punish you whatever you do." He gave up being destructive. We cannot punish if we try to understand. Let us honestly realise that when we punish a child we are venting the anger that belongs to something else. In the old days I whacked boys again and again because I was worried—the inspector was coming, I had had a quarrel with a friend—any old excuse served.

There is difficulty in deciding what is and what is not punishment. A few weeks ago a boy borrowed my best plane. I found it next day lying in the rain. I told him that I should not lend him that plane again. That was not punishment. Punishment involves the idea of morality, of good and bad. The leaving out of the plane was bad—for the plane, but morally there was no bad about it. It is an important factor in education to learn that you cannot borrow tools and spoil them.

To let a child have all his own way at another's expense is bad for the child. The spoilt child is a bad citizen.

Another illustration. A little boy came from a school where there were women only on the staff. He terrorised the school by throwing things about and threatening murder. He tried the game with me, and I soon concluded that he was using his tempers for the purpose of seeing people get alarmed. One day when I entered the playroom I found the children clustered at one end, while at the other end stood the boy. He had a hammer in his hand, and was threatening to hit anyone who approached him.

"Chuck it, my lad," I said sharply. "We aren't afraid of you."

He dropped the hammer and rushed at me, biting and kicking me.

"Every time you scratch or bite me," I said quietly, "I'll hit you back."

And I did. He very soon gave up the contest and rushed from the room.

This was not punishment. It was a necessary lesson. "You cannot have it all your

own way." I admit now that I should not act in the same way again. The protest should have come from children of his own age. They ought to have gone for him. Unfortunately there were no children present at the moment who were strong enough to tackle him. The danger in my giving him his lesson was that he would get a conscience about it. I am father substitute. He loves father and his love keeps him from expressing all his hate of father. (The state of my hands and face afterwards betrayed the fact that he had expended quite a lot of hate on me).

It is possible that punishment in most homes is punishment for disobedience. In schools disobedience and insolence are looked upon as bad crimes. When I was a whacking dominie I always was most angry at the boy who disobeyed me. My little dignity was wounded. I was the tin god of the classroom, just as Daddy is the tin god of the home. To punish for disobedience is to identify oneself with the omnipotent Almighty. "Thou shalt have no other Gods."

An impious question comes up: Why should

a child obey? He must obey to satisfy the adult's desire for power. To shout "'Bout Turn!" to a company of infantry is rather thrilling. Yet, why should a child obey? Well, well! He may get his feet wet if he disobeys the command to put on shoes; he may fall over the cliff if he disobeys father's shout. Yes, the child should obey when it is a matter of life and death. But how often is a child punished for disobeying in matters of life and death? Seldom, if ever. He is generally hugged and called "My Precious! Thank God you're safe!" It is for small things that a child is usually punished.

Now it is possible to run a house where obedience is not required. If I say to a child: "Get your books and have a lesson in English" he will refuse to come if he is not interested in English. But if I say, as I did last week: "All that centre part of the garden is planted. No one is to run over it now," the children accept it in the same way they accept Derrick's command: "Nobody is to use my tools unless they ask me first." Obedience is merely a matter of give and take.

I am not allowed to use Derrick's tools unless I ask him to lend me something. He is twelve. Occasionally with a new pupil there is disobedience of a law passed by the *Schulgemeinde*. Then the children take action—sometimes! In the main the school runs along without any authority and any obedience. Each is free to do what he likes as long as he is not trespassing on the freedom of others. That is quite a realisable aim in any community.

The punishment that takes the form of a lecture is more dangerous than the rod that spoils the child. The awfulness of these lectures! "But did you not know that you were doing wrong?" A sobbing nod. "Say that you are sorry for doing it." As a training of humbugs and hypocrites the lecture form of punishment has no rival. But worse still is the praying for the erring one's soul. That is unpardonable.

Rewards have not the extreme danger that punishment has. Their's is a subtle undermining of morale. The case against rewards is that rewards are supererogatory. To offer

a prize for doing a deed is to show that the deed is not worth doing for its own sake. No artist ever works for reward; his reward is the joy of creating. In a manner a prize is a tip on promotion. I give a porter a shilling for carrying my bag; I give a boy a book for beating the other boys at Latin. Tips. Moreover, rewards bolster up the existing system of competition. To get the better of the other man is a damnable doctrine. In actual practice reward-giving has a bad psychological effect, for it arouses jealousies. A boy's dislike of a younger brother often dates from mother's remark: "Your little brother can do it better than you can." This reminds me of an incident I once witnessed in Edinburgh, an incident that is a mere digression. Two little girls in The Meadows. One of them carried a small child.

First Girl: "Stop yer crying, baby. You ought to have mair sense."

Second Girl: "G'way, Jean, what sense did you have when you was her age?"

First Girl (tossing her head): "I had lots of sense, for only this morning my mither said

to me: Jeannie, she said, you had more sense when you were three year old than you have now."

It is when we consider interest that we realise fully the wrongness of rewards and punishments. Interest is the life force of the whole personality. Attention belongs to consciousness, and it is possible to attend to a blackboard and to be interested in pirates at the same time. Now we cannot compel interest. No man can force me to be interested in—say—collecting stamps. I cannot compel myself to be interested in postage stamps. Reward and punishment attempt to compel interest. A teacher with a cane will compel interest, but interest in the cane and not in the sums on the blackboard. The majority of our prize-winners in schools and colleges sink into mediocrity later. Their interest was in the prize and not in the subject. To be good because you are fearfully interested in the policeman at the corner is a feeble ideal. And that is what the goodness of disciplined pupils is. I have heard of the discipline that comes from pride, and in the

Life Guards there may be this element. All I know from experience is that the discipline of a regiment is mostly founded on fear. Anyone who has been inspected by the guard officer knows that the fear of C.B. was a strong element in the enthusiasm for cleaning equipment and buttons. It is a queer system that tried to make men brave by making them fear.

I have left the most telling argument against punishment until the last.

To punish is to assume that a child is responsible, that it has the will to do what the adult calls right. In to-day's Sunday paper I read that a youth who murdered a dancing girl was declared guilty but insane. There is no question of punishing him. Humanity forbids the flogging of an insane man. But why not apply the idea of irresponsibility all round? The children who steal are unconscious of their reasons for stealing. Suppose I had beaten little Billie for smashing up the gold watch! The child who flies into violent tempers cannot control himself. Punishment is as useless as it is

dangerous. It certainly frightens the child, but the wrong part of the child; it terrifies the conscious and leaves untouched the unconscious. I have seen in a hospital two doctors treating a servant girl who had what they called hysterical paralysis. They applied electricity to her hand, and the agony made her move her hand.

"There you are," they said, "we have proved to you that you can move your hand."

But the girl continued to have a hand that she could not move. Every night she yelled when the treatment began. That was many years ago. I hope that doctors are not treating hysterical paralysis like that now. The reason for the illness was buried in the unconscious, and all the talking and proof in the world could not reach the unconscious. Reasoning from other cases, I guess that the girl was unconsciously punishing her hand for doing what her conscience forbade her to do.

Flogging has always failed and always will fail, for it chastises the body without helping the mind. It is the most un-Christian act in

the world. It is given by people who are sadistic by nature. It is vengeance rather than punishment. The argument that it is given as a deterrent is a pure rationalisation. No man is bad enough to merit flogging. It can only be given by sexual perverts, can only be advocated by sexual perverts. Moreover, it makes the victim a sexual pervert. There is any amount of proof that the flogged get sexual excitement during the act.

Let every flogger pause before he acts. Let him ask himself a few questions. Am I acting from noble motives only? Am I possibly homosexual? Am I a pervert in any way? Am I a hater of the flesh? Would Jesus Christ flog anyone? Alas! one does not know what one is. One does not see in oneself what one would hate to see. Men were deceivers ever—deceivers of themselves.

CHAPTER XII

FEAR

In nature fear serves the purpose of race preservation. Rabbits and horses have survived because of the fear that forced them to run from danger. Fear is the law of the wild. There must have been a time in the history of man when fear of death made him flee and hide. To-day life has become so safe that fear does not require to serve the purpose of protection. And yet it is probable that humanity to-day experiences more fear than did our stone age ancestors. We are afraid of so many things; afraid of poverty, of ridicule, of ghosts, of burglars, of accidents, of public opinion, of disease, of death. A man's life is the story of his fears. Millions of adults fear to walk in the dark; thousands have a vague feeling of uneasiness when a

policeman rings the front door bell. The majority of voyagers have phantasies of the ship's sinking. Railway travellers seek the middle coaches of a train. "Safety First" expresses man's leading principle. Primitive man had only the large-bodied monsters to fear, but we have many monsters—trains, ships, aeroplanes, burglars, motor-cars, most potent of all, the fear of being found out.

Fear is still necessary to us. Fear makes me cross the Strand carefully. When I ride a motor-cycle at speed I am very much afraid, but the fear is converted into exhilaration. So in a small rowing-boat I am always afraid when the other fellow is rowing. When I row I am not afraid, rather my fear has changed into interest in the work. A hero is a man who can change his fear into positive energy. The hero harnesses his fear. The coward is incapable of converting his fear into positive action. Cowardice is much more universal than bravery.

Fear is always egoistic; we fear for our own skins or for the skins of those we love.

We fear mostly for our own skins. When a boy I used to fear the dark evening walk to the farm for the milk, but when my sister went I had no fear that she would be murdered on the way. Fear must be egoistic, for every fear is ultimately a fear of death. And there are many deaths which we fear—social death, death of reputation, death of self-respect. It can also be said with truth that every fear is a fear of self. In a soldier the most distressing fear is the fear of being afraid. In bravery there is very often a great fear of public opinion, that is fear of losing one's self-respect, for one measures oneself with the crowd. In one way the man who runs away from a battle is a brave man, for the scorn of men is a death.

We are all cowards. Some of us manage to hide our cowardice; others of us betray it. It is necessary to try to discover why cowardice varies in different individuals. We must remember that cowardice is always relative. I recall my first lesson in bomb-throwing as a recruit. One man failed to throw his bomb over into the pit. It ex-

ploded and knocked out a few men. Luckily none were killed. The bombing was ended for that day, but on the following day we were marched back to the bombing ground. When I took my first bomb in my hand my hand trembled. The sergeant looked at me with contempt and told me I was a damned coward. I admitted it. This sergeant, a man who had done deeds deserving of the V.C., knew no physical fear. But not long afterwards he said to me: "Neill, I hate to drill a squad when you are in it. I'm in a dead funk all the time." Surprised, I asked him why.

"Because you're an M.A.," he said—"and I murder the grammar."

Psychology cannot tell why one child is born with courage, while another is born with a shrinking soul. It may be that pre-natal influence has much to do with it. If a child is not wanted it is quite possible that the mother gives her own personality of the moment to the unborn child. It may be that the unwanted child is born with a timid nature; with a psychology that fears life and

desires to stay in the womb. I know a mother with four children. She loved the father of one but did not love the father of three. The three are unhealthy children; the one is healthy. But to build a positive theory on a case like this would be absurd.

Pre-natal influences are beyond our power to deal with. It is, however, certain that many children are made cowards by their early training.

A well-known psycho-analyst told me of the case of a young man. At the age of six he was caught by his father having a mild sexual interest in a girl of seven. The father gave him a severe hiding. The hiding made the boy a coward for life. He had always to be repeating the early experience; he kept looking for the beating. Thus he could fall in love only with forbidden fruits, with women who were married or engaged. He had always a great fear that the husband or lover would thrash him. And the fear was transferred to everything. The man was an unhappy, timid soul, always inferior, always anticipating danger. He betrayed his timidity

in little things. On a bright summer's day he would take a macintosh and an umbrella if he had to walk half a mile. He said nay to life. Punishment for an infantile sexual interest is a sure way to make a child a coward. Threatening hell fire is another sure way.

Freudians speak much about the Castration Complex. There certainly is a Castration Complex. I have in my school to-day a tiny chap who was told that his penis would be cut off if he touched it. I find this fear in boys and girls. It is a fear that has terrible consequences, for a fear and a wish are never far apart. Often the fear of castration is a wish for castration, for castration as a punishment for masturbation, for castration as a means of getting rid of temptaion. Sex in everything! Yes, the child uses sex as the chief peg on which to hang his fears. For he has been told that sex is wicked. The child with night terrors is often the child who is afraid of his sex thoughts. The devil may come and take him to hell, for is he not a sinful boy who deserves punishment? The bogey man, the ghost, the goblin are only the

devil in disguise. Fear comes from a guilty conscience, and it is the ignorance of the parents that gives the child his guilty conscience.

I have already distinguished a fear from a phobia. In the phobia the object that excites terror is a comparatively harmless one. The object is a symbol only. Thus I was once asked to see a schoolgirl who had a phobia of earthworms. I asked her to draw one and she drew a penis. Then she told me of a soldier who used to exhibit himself to her on her way to school. The fear was displaced. Now the phobia showed that the girl was extremely interested in the origin of the phobia. Neurotically interested. This followed on her education in sex matters. The mystery and secrecy of such matters gave her an abnormal interest in them. Certainly she ought not to have seen an exhibitionist, but a better education on sex matters would have enabled her to go through the ordeal without reacting neurotically to it.

Phobias occur very often in quite young children. The son of a stern father may

develop a phobia of horses or lions or policemen; a phobia of any obvious father symbol. Here again we see the awful danger of introducing fear into a child's life. There are many grown men who creep through life as failures because they had stern fathers. And there are many failures who owe their incapacity to too loving mothers. When a mother is too affectionate the child acquires a timid attitude to life. He is tied to mother's apron-strings long after the period when he should break away from his mother. Parents must face the bitter fact that it is necessary for children that they should break away from the parents. Naturally I do not mean that they should leave their parents and never see them again. I mean breaking away psychically; ridding themselves of dependence on home. It is natural for a mother to try to keep her children dependent on her. I know many homes where daughters have remained at home to comfort parents' old age. In most of the cases I know the home is unhappy. As Shaw says somewhere: "You cannot sacrifice yourself for others without hating

those for whom you have sacrificed yourself." One part of a daughter's psyche is urging her to go out into the world and live her own life; the other part, the dutiful part, compels her to remain with her parents. She must always have an inner conflict, and this conflict usually shows itself in irritation—"Of course I love mother, but she is so tiresome sometimes."

A common origin of fear in children is the sleeping in their parents' room. A child of four will see and overhear what he cannot understand. Father becomes a bad man who ill-uses mother. Sadism may result. The boy, identifying himself with father, becomes later a youth who associates sex with cruelty. The timid boy or the girl may identify himself or herself with mother and become a masochist, associating sex with suffering. I have just got Stekel's latest book, a thick volume called *Sadismus und Masochismsus,* but as yet I have not read it. I expect to find much evidence of the evil effects of sleeping in parents' bedrooms.

To digress quite irrelevantly—Stekel's book gave me a wonderful instance of the

power of the unconscious. He sent me the book in paper covers, and I set about binding it. I had already found a page in which he mentioned my name to differ in friendly spirit with my belief that the child is born good. I was slightly annoyed because he had set me up only to knock me down again. Besides, he gave me the wrong initials—A. E. And he called me "the well-known *English* educationist." Now binding a book is an elaborate business. One must take it apart into sections and then sew the sections together. Naturally one does not consciously know the contents of the sections. I bound the book, opened it—and a leaf fell out. I was astonished to find that I had omitted to sew in the page containing the criticism of my theory. My unconscious must have known the number of the unwelcome page. Friends have called it a queer coincidence, and I wonder what the odds are for coincidence, for there are 675 pages in the book.

The most potent influence for fear in a child's life is the idea of eternal damnation. Often in the streets I hear mothers say:

"Stop that, Tommy! Here's the policeman coming!" A minor evil of this kind of treatment is that the child early discovers that his mother is a liar. The major evil lies in the fact that the policeman is the Devil. He is the man who takes you away and locks you up in darkness. The child always attaches the fear to his worst transgressions. Thus the child who masturbates may show abnormal terror of a policeman when the latter catches him throwing stones. The fear is really a fear of God and the Devil. "At last I am found out and caught!" My opinion is that to a small child God and the Devil are one person. Both punish. I notice that to neurotic children I represent both God and Devil. The other week when we all saw a cinema film about a man who sold his soul to the Devil, the children were unanimous in agreeing that the Devil was very like me. I always become the Devil to boys who have been taught that the sex sin is the sin against the Holy Ghost. When I tell them that there is nothing sinful about the body they look upon me as the tempting Devil. One little chap

took up a hammer to kill the Devil one day. Helping neurotics is a dangerous life.

Much fear comes from past thoughts of criminality. We have all killed people in phantasy. I believe that the child of five kills me in phantasy when I thwart his wishes. My pupils joyfully cover me with water-pistols. "Pop! Hands up! You're dead!" I have purposely been an authority of a morning in order to see the effect on the day's shooting. I have been killed many times on such occasions. After phantasy fear enters—"Suppose he were to die! I would be the guilty one, for I wished it." I have seen adults who are unconsciously convinced that they were responsible for a father's or mother's death. This kind of fear is one that could be lessened if parents would refrain from rousing the child's hate by storming and beating. And the hundreds of schools that still use corporal punishment are doing irreparable wrong to little children. When I was in Holland and Germany and Austria I was always ashamed when teachers asked me if corporal punishment was used in Britain.

In Germany a teacher who strikes a pupil is tried for assault, and generally punished. In Holland any teacher who lifts his hand to strike a pupil is dismissed. The flogging and strapping of Britain is one of our greatest disgraces. A doctor in one of our big cities said to me recently: "There is a brute of a headmaster here who beats the children cruelly. I often have nervous children brought to me because of him, but I can do nothing. He has public opinion and the law on his side."

We talk of a C3 nation. This introducing of fear into countless lives of children is bound to make us a C3 nation. Thousands of teachers do their work splendidly without having to introduce fear. The others are incompetent mis-fits who ought to be driven out of the profession. I emphasise the truth that fear in a child's life is a terrible thing. "Casting out Fear" ought to be the motto over every school door. I often say that my work is useless, for I spend my time patching up the children who have been wounded by people who gave them fear. I am quite

willing to give up the work and open a motor shop if the other fellow will give up his work of wounding the children.

Solomon with his rod theory has done more harm than have his proverbs done good. His theory survives because it salves the conscience of the coward who hates himself and dare not face his self-hate. And the children pay the price for the cowardice of the adults. No man who had any power of introspection could beat a child, could have the wish to beat a child.

Beating gives a child fear only when it is associated with a moral idea, with the idea of wrong. If a street arab knocked off my silk hat with a lump of clay and I caught him and gave him a clump on the ear, the reaction would be a natural phenomenon. No harm would be done to the boy's soul. But if I went to the headmaster of his school and demanded punishment for the culprit the fear introduced by the punishment would be a bad thing for the child. The affair would at once become an affair of morals. The child would feel that he had committed a sin. The scene

can be easily imagined. I stand with my muddy hat; the headmaster sits and fixes the boy with a baleful eye; the boy stands with head down. He is over-awed by the dignity of his accusers. Running him down on the street I had been his equal. I had no dignity after my hat had been knocked off. I was a bloke. The boy had learned a necessary lesson of life, the lesson that if you hit a bloke, he'll biff you. Punishment has nothing to do with hot blood. It is cold and judicial. It is highly moral. It avows that it is wholly for the culprit's good, or, in the case of capital punishment, for society's good. It is the super-evidence of man's identifying himself with God. Punishment can never be justice, for no man can be just. Judges are not more moral than dustmen, not less free from prejudice. No one imagines that a judge, who is a strong churchman, a Conservative, a militarist, can possibly be just to a Communist arrested for crying: "Down with the Army!" Justice implies complete understanding. In school the teacher who is cruel to a child who has committed a sexual offence is certainly

the teacher who has ugly sex complexes. So in a law court, a judge who unconsciously was strongly homosexual would be likely to be savage in sentencing a prisoner charged with homosexual practices. We cannot be just because we do not know ourselves. Christ was just because he knew his own weakness. We try to be just because we imagine we know our own strength. And it is so tragically unfair to the children. They cannot distinguish adult indignation from adult perversion. Most tragic of all, an adult can never educate a child beyond his own complexes. If we are bound we cannot make children free. What we do is to give them our own complexes. Children fear us and then accept our values. And what values we adults have! I think of our social evils. I own outright that I am doing nothing to better these evils: I am too selfish. They go me nothing on—to translate literally the German: *Das geht mich gar nichts an.* And because I am too selfish to set these evils right I claim to be a man who cannot dispense justice to children. My inactivity proves that I am not interested

enough in these evils. This week I have bought a dog (25s.), tools for my turning-lathe (£2), tobacco (£2 5s.). It did not occur to me to give the money to the poor in East Ham. Hence I never preach to children that slums are an abomination unto the world. I used to—before I realised what a humbug I was.

It is an interesting fact that adults are actors when they deal with children. We all fear to be found out by the children. A father feels very uncomfortable when a garrulous sister tells the children that their father, as a boy, was called Snuffles, and that he used to be afraid of mice. I used to dislike it when pupils learned my Christian name and its boyhood contraction. In some obscure way we fear children. It may be that we fear their innocence and trust. Whatever the reason we act a lie to them. I know many teachers who never smoke in the presence of their pupils. No man would care to show cowardice in the presence of children. How many fathers and teachers would answer truthfully a child's question: Were you ever drunk?

or: Did you ever swear? "Father, what did you do in the Great War?" was an advertisement that voiced the general fear that adults have of children. It is this fear of children that makes adults hypocrites. Nearly every boy thinks that his father could fight six men; nearly every father wants his son to think that he could fight six men. As a small boy I could not forgive my father for jumping over a wall to escape a wild bull. The children in their phantasies make us heroes and knights, and we try to live up to it. But one day we are all found out. One day a child sees clearly that its parents and teachers have been liars and deceivers. Possibly in every young life comes a period when the parents are criticised and despised as out-of-date. This period follows the finding out of the parents. The contempt is simply a contempt for the parents who have been phantasies. The contrast between the wonderful dream parents and the real weak parents is too great, and contempt arises. Later the child returns to his parents with sympathy and understanding, but without

illusions. And yet all this misunderstanding would be unnecessary if parents refused to be actors. The happiest homes I know are those in which the parents are frankly honest with their children. Fear does not enter these homes. Father and son are pals. Love can thrive in such homes. In other homes love is crushed by fear. Dignity and respect hold love aloof. Only a dog can love and respect. Respect always implies fear. I could respect Hindenburg, but I could not respect O. Henry. On the other hand, I could not love Hindenburg, whereas I could love O. Henry (easily the most lovable of all writers).

Two excellent symbols. In dealing with children we follow Hindenburg, the iron will, the militarist, the man who knows his own mind. But we should follow O. Henry, the man who lived with publicans and sinners, the man who was too charitable to judge his fellow-men, the man who loved humanity.

CHAPTER XIII

PARENT AND TEACHER

I HAVE often said and have often heard other teachers say: "Oh for a school for orphans!" Which being interpreted means that there is a conflict between teachers and parents. There are schoolmasters who scorn the suggestion—"My dear sir, in my school we strive for and, sir, attain to a real unity between parent and teacher." It is usually these teachers who say of co-education: "In our school there is no sex. The boys and girls are like brothers and sisters."

To prevent misunderstanding I announce that personally I seldom have trouble with parents. We get on splendidly together, but then I am excluding the parents who are asked

not to send their children. I always tell the parents quite frankly what my methods are; I always tell them to take it or leave it, because there can be no question of compromise in the school. My moral victory is naturally greater than my financial victory. Life, however, is made tolerable. And from the child's point of view disagreement between school and home is disastrous. He begins to have a conflict—Which is right, home or school? It is essential for a child's growth and happiness that home and school should have a single purpose.

Now the chief cause of disagreement between parent and teacher is jealousy. A girl pupil of fifteen, a day-pupil when I was an assistant, said to me: "If I want to make Daddy roaring mad I just say to him: 'Mr. Neill says so-and-so'." Of course; nothing more natural than to get roaring wild. Parents are jealous of any teacher that a child loves. It is natural to be. Children are possessions. They are property. They are a part of the parent's ego. It is unnatural for a mother to love her daughter-in-law, a

father his son-in-law. Human love must have possession.

The child goes to school. I repeat that many parents unconsciously like a strict school for their children, for at vacation time the children joy to go home. The child hate has been given to the stern teachers; the child love is thrown lavishly upon the parents. This is the mechanism of the process by which a mother shifts a child's hate to father, by saying: "Wait till your father comes home to-night. He'll give you what for."

The teacher is equally and frailly human with the parent. Many teachers have no children of their own, and unconsciously they adopt their pupils. They strive, without realising what they are doing, to steal the child from the parents. It is really necessary for a teacher to be analysed. Many teachers of both sexes are unconsciously homosexual. There is no sin in being homosexual, but a homosexual teacher will have an unhealthy effect on pupils. Thus, as Theodore Faithfull wrote recently, a homosexual teacher will tend to bring out the feminine side of boys.

Analysis is no panacea for all ills. It has a limited scope, but it clears the ground for synthesis. I think that the chief merit of analysis is that it makes one understand others more easily, makes one more charitable. For this reason alone I strongly recommend it for teachers, for, after all, their work is to understand others. The analysed teacher will cheerfully face his attitude to children, and by facing it improve it.

The ego of the teacher, like every ego seeking power, will strive to draw the children to himself. Think what a tin god a teacher really is. He is the centre of the picture, the leading star-actor; he commands and is obeyed; he metes out justice; he does nearly all the talking. It is no wonder that teachers can be recognised on the streets by their speech and manner. It is the law of schools that the teacher must be respected. The law sides with him; if he thrashes an unruly boy too severely the magistrate in nine cases out of ten backs up the teacher. The ego of the teacher demands to own the child. Thus the teacher uses love and power to steal away the

children from their parents. And the parent will allow the teacher power, but he will not allow him love. The strict school demands power only, and the parent is satisfied.

In the free school the power element is eliminated. In my school there is no chance of a teacher's showing off his ego. He cannot compete with the more vocal egoism of the children. Thus, instead of respecting me as an ego the children often call me a fool or a silly ass. Generally these are terms of endearment. In a free school the love element becomes the important one. A boy comes to me from a more or less strict home. He is allowed freedom to do what he likes. No one criticises him; no one tells him to mind his manners; no one asks him to be seen and not heard. The school is naturally a paradise to a boy, for paradise to a boy is a place where he can express his whole ego. His delight in being free to express himself soon becomes linked up with me. I am the man who allows him to be free. I am the Daddy that Daddy should have been. The boy is not really loving me. A boy does not love; he wants

to be loved. His unspoken thought is: "I am happy here. Old Neill is rather a decent sort of chap, never butts in and all that. He must be jolly fond of me or he would butt in and order me about."

Vacation comes. He goes home. Here he is accustomed to use good tools. At home he borrows father's plane, and no doubt leaves it lying on the piano. Father protests. The boy realises that home is not a free place. Then there is the question of clothes. The Smiths next door will remark on his running about in muddy trousers. Home has any amount of complications for a child. It is no exaggeration to say that many children are spoiled by their parents' fear of neighbours' opinion. Think of Sunday clothes. Think of the training that attempts to placate relatives, maiden aunts generally. A good percentage of my pupils suffers badly from relationitis. I have a very un-Christianlike desire to have an acrimonious talk with the following relations of my pupils: two grandfathers (religious), four aunts (religious and prudish), two uncles (irreligious and moralis-

ing). I sternly forbade two parents to allow their son to visit his Hellfirephile grandfather, but they declared that it was not possible to take so drastic a step.

At a free school the child is safe from relatives. Nowadays I warn them off. Two years ago an uncle came and took out his nephew, aged nine. The boy came back and began to throw bread about the dining-room.

"Your outing seems to have upset you," I said. "What did your uncle talk about?"

"Oh," he said lightly, "he talked about God all the time, God and the Bible."

"Didn't happen to quote the text about casting your bread upon the waters, did he?" I asked, and he went off into laughter, and incidentally gave up bread-throwing. When that uncle returns his nephew is "not at home."

I cannot complain about the parents of my pupils. Most of them are with me all the way. One or two timorously doubt, but continue to trust. The ones who are with me all the way have no occasion to be jealous. The children feel just as free at home as at school, and they like going home. Pupils, whose parents are

not fully believers, do not want to go home for holidays. The parents demand too much. They do not realise that a child of eight is interested mainly in himself. He has no social sense, no real idea of duty. At school he is living out his selfishness in the hope (my hope) that he will get rid of it by expressing it. One day he will become social because his deference to public opinion will modify his selfishness. The parent is sometimes of little faith. He or she wants to see immediate results. One mother wrote me that she wanted her daughter to obey her. I teach her daughter to obey herself. The mother finds her disobedient, but I find her always obedient. Five minutes ago she came into my room to argue the point about dogs and their training.

"Buzz off," I said, "I'm busy writing." And she went out without a word. Obedience should be social courtesy. There should be no right to obedience. It must come from within, not without.

Another bugbear with some parents is manners. Lately a boy from a good home

came to school. He knocked at the drawing-room door when he entered, always closed the door when he went out. Ten years old. Said I: "It will last a week." I was wrong. It lasted two days. I have yet to meet the boy who shuts doors because of his inner urge. Of course, I shout at a child: "Shut the door!" not because I try to train his manners, but because I do not want to rise and shut it myself. Manners are an adult conception. Children, be they duke's children or dustman's, have no interest in or use for manners. Lately, when I was lecturing, an old man got up and complained about the manners of children to-day.

"Why," he said with warmth, "last Saturday I was walking in the park, and two small children came by. 'Hello, man,' said one of them."

I answered him. "What is wrong with 'Hello, man?" Would it have pleased you better if they had said: 'Hello, gentleman?' The truth is that you were injured. Your sense of dignity was offended. You want subservience from children, not manners."

This is true of many adults. It is pure bumptiousness. It is the treating of children as if they were vassals under feudalism. It is selfishness that has less justification than has the selfishness of children. Children must be selfish, but an adult ought to confine his selfishness to things and not people.

I find that children correct each other. One of my pupils made eating a very loud affair until the others jeered at him. On the other hand, when one little fellow used his knife for eating mince, the others were inclined to think it a good plan. They asked each other why you shouldn't eat with a knife. The reply that you might cut your mouth was dismissed on the grounds that most knives are blunt enough for anything. Children should be free to question the rules of etiquette, for eating peas with a knife is a personal thing. They should not be free to question what might be called social manners. If a child enters our drawing-room with muddy boots we shout at him, for the drawing-room belongs to the adults, and they have the right to decree what shall enter and what not. When

a boy was impudent to our butcher I called a *Schulgemeinde* and told that the butcher had complained to me. But I think it would have been better if the butcher had boxed his ears.

What we generally call manners are not worth teaching. They are at best pretty survivals of customs. The doffing of the hat in the presence of ladies is a meaningless custom. As a boy I doffed my hat to the minister's wife, but not to my mother or sisters. I suppose I realised dimly that I did not have to pretend in their presence. Study the faces of the men who offer their seat to ladies in a tube train. They do not appear to enjoy their courtesy. I have given up my seat often, but always through moral cowardice rather than deference to womanhood. Still, customs like hat-doffing, are at worst harmless. The boy will conform to custom later on. At the age of ten, however, anything savouring of sham should be kept away from him. In children the evening prayer is a sham. I have asked scores of children: "What do you think about when you say your prayers?" Everyone tells the

same tale; everyone thinks of other things all the time. A child must, for the prayer means nothing to him. It was an imposition from without. A million men say Grace before Meals daily, and probably 999,999 men say it mechanically, as we say Beg Pardon when someone asks us to pass the mustard. But why pass our mechanical prayers and manners on to the new generation? It is not honest. It is not Christian.

It is a truth that manners cannot be taught. Etiquette can be taught. Etiquette belongs to the conscious: manners to the unconscious. To be mannerly is to have an innate good taste, to have the gift of putting yourself in the other man's shoes. Etiquette allows one to talk during a concert: manners forbid one to talk. Manners prohibit the wounding of anyone, but etiquette permits gossip and scandal. Etiquette is the veneer of manners. Its function is to hide, to disguise. Good manners would rescue women from poverty and prostitution, whereas etiquette serves to gild our ugly social system. The progress of civilisation consists in ridding the world of

sham and shoddy. We must leave the children free to go a step farther than our veneered civilisation has gone.

By ridding the children of fears and hates we are helping forward the new civilisation of good manners. Bad manners always spring from a disordered psychic system. Slander and scandal and gossip and backbiting are all subjective faults; in the culprit they show hate of self. They prove that the scandal-monger is unhappy. If we can take the children into a world where they will be happy we shall automatically rid them of all desire to hate. In other words, these children will have good manners. If they eat with knives they will not offend by talking through a Beethoven Symphony. If they pass Mrs. Brown without doffing their caps they will not pass on the report that Mrs. Brown drinks brandy.

A bone of contention between parent and teacher is the future life question. "It is all very well to give the child freedom, but will he be able to take his place in society? What about examinations?"

Now examinations, unfortunately, are with us. They are much abused, rightly abused. Yet, personally, I never disliked them. There was a queer, vague pleasure in working for an examination. The examination stood as a milestone on the way. It afforded an immediate aim. Thus in medicine the first-year student need not contemplate the long hard road that leads through the forests of medicine, surgery, materia medica, midwifery; he has enough to do to concentrate on his anatomy, chemistry, physics, botany and zoology. True that most of his study is wasted so far as his ultimate proficiency as a practising physician is concerned. Far better for him if his first year's course consisted of literature, psychology, folk lore symbolism. Under the present system a man may become a doctor without having any general culture at all.

The examination, then, as a milestone is tolerable and perhaps desirable. I set examinations myself. The examination as a test of knowledge or ability is bad. Certainly in a few cases, example anatomy, an examination

shows how much a candidate does not know. No examination can show how much a candidate knows. The absurdity of the anatomy exam. is that most of the crammed stuff is forgotten long before the student has occasion to work practically. The anatomy exam. might well be left until the student is qualified. If then he wants to do surgery his interest will make him learn with pleasure in a month more anatomy than he would have learned in a year as a student with a book of mnemonics in his waistcoat pocket. I speak as a layman. Perhaps I had better stick to my own last. I took an Honours English degree. For four years I studied for exams. in English, Old Middle and Modern. Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare; dullest of all, Dryden. Professor Saintsbury had an unfortunate liking for Dryden, and we all had to pretend to an interest in Dryden. To-day I could not read any of these writers; to-day I could not contribute anything at all to a discussion on post-Popian poetry or pre-Paterian prose. But according to the standard the examination system gave out I am fully qualified to

be a lecturer in English Literature at a university or high school. My friend, Edwin Muir, the brilliant critic and poet, never went to a university, never passed an examination. If he were not my friend I would hope for a professorship for him one day. Merit comes out in spite of the examination system. The system is wrong because it emphasises the wrong things. A man should be awarded a university degree for creative work. Instead of spending four years reading up what Hazlitt and Coleridge said about Shakespeare (I had no time in these days to read Shakespeare's plays), I should have been writing a play. To write a bad Limerick is better than to learn *Paradise Lost* by heart.

But to return to the parents—their idea seems to be that, because the exam. system is unnatural and bad, their free children will fail to tackle its difficulties. I cannot answer these parents by pointing out my own results, for I have not been long enough in my school to see children going on to universities. But I think of King Alfred School in Hampstead, where I taught under John Russell.

A free school after my conception of a free school it was not. It had a time-table with compulsory attendance. The children, however, were very happy, and they did not work so hard as the children in high schools. But one by one as they reached the age of fifteen boys and girls put on a spurt. To-day I know of six out of a class of about twelve who are at universities.

It is the parent who feels himself a failure who is most anxious about his children's future in an exam-ridden world. The one chance of failure is inability to face life. By allowing the child to be happy we are giving him the best possible chance, for we are making him an optimist, a positive creator. Free children may not make money, but they will make history.

CHAPTER XIII

THE UNHAPPY MARRIAGE

WHAT makes a child neurotic? In quite a lot of cases the fact that his parents do not love each other. The neurotic child craves for love, and in his home there is no love. He hears his parents snarl at each other. They honestly try to keep their secret from the child, but the child can sense an atmosphere. He judges by appearances more than by what he hears. No child is deceived by words like "dearest" and "darling."

When I was in Germany I had the following cases:

Girl of fifteen, thief, mother disloyal to father. Girl knew.

Girl of fourteen, unhappy dreamer; neurosis said to date from a day when she saw her father with his lover.

Girl of twelve, hated everyone; father impotent, mother soured.

Boy of eight, thief; father and mother quarrelled openly.

Boy of nine; lived in phantasy (analerotic mostly); parents furtively hostile to each other.

Girl of fourteen, bed-wetter; parents living apart.

Boy of nine; impossible at home owing to ill-temper; lived in phantasy of grandeur; mother unhappily married.

I realised then how difficult a task it is to cure a child when the home remains a place of lovelessness. Often have I answered a mother's question: What shall I do about my child? with the words: Go and get yourself analysed. To adapt *Julius Caesar*—"The fault, dear Brutus, lies not in our *children* but in ourselves." Mothers unconsciously make their children a part of their own unsolved problems. One mother was always in a state of fear concerning her daughter's health. She was continually writing me long letters of direction—what the girl should eat, or rather not eat; how she should be clothed, etc.

I suspected unconscious death-wishes against the daughter. One day the mother came to see me, and she told me of her life tragedy. "The thought has often come to me," she said, "that if my daughter were not alive I should be free to go away with the man I love." But she was not conscious of the other hidden wish—*She might die.* The great concern for her daughter's health was an over-compensation for the unconscious death-wish. The case of this poor woman shows us how primitive we all are fundamentally. Forced early into a wealthy marriage this woman missed the great experience of love. When love came, too late, her whole soul craved for the satisfaction of loving and being loved. This egoistic impulse was strong enough to overwhelm all other wishes and interests. It was ready to sacrifice a daughter in order to leave the path clear for itself. Mistaken cultural ideas made her reject her happiness in favour of making happy her child. I say mistaken ideas, for the woman made herself very unhappy and her unhappiness made her child a neurotic, life-fearing, shrinking soul.

Fathers and mothers have often said to me that they would separate if it were not for the children. It would be better for the children if the unloving parents did separate, a thousand times better. Unloving matrimonial life means an unhappy home always, and an unhappy atmosphere is psychical death to a child. I have sometimes found that the little son of an unhappily married mother reacts to his mother in terms of hate. He torments his mother in a sadistic manner. One boy used to bite and scratch his mother. Less extreme cases torture the mother by continually demanding her attention. According to the Œdipus Complex theory it should be the other way about. The little boy looks upon his father as a rival for mother's love. One would naturally suppose that in a case where father is manifestly out of the running the son would, as the successful suitor, show increased tenderness to his mother. I often find him showing an extraordinary cruelty to his mother. To try to explain this phenomenon is guess-work. It may be that the boy identifies himself with the father who shows

no love to the mother. But then each case is complicated. In two cases brought to my notice recently the sadistic boy had a brother of whom he was jealous. In one of the cases I know for certain that the mother showered her love on the rival brother. Here hate was thwarted love.

The unhappily married mother will always show favouritism. The marital outlet for love being closed she will concentrate her love on one child. What the unconscious currents are we do not know. Her unloved child may have traits that resemble those of the father. More probably the preference dates from childhood, for many an unhappy marriage is due to circumstances that spring from childhood days. I know a man who always fell in love with girls who resembled his favourite sister. He married one of them and lived very unhappily afterwards.

The essential thing in a child's life is love, but the unhappily married parent cannot give love in proper proportion. Either too little or too much love is given. It is difficult to say which is the greater evil. The child starved

of love becomes a hate-person, anti-social and critical. The child overwhelmed with love becomes a mother's darling, a timid feminine soul, always seeking the safety of the mother. The mother may be symbolised by a house (as in agoraphobia), by Mother Church, by Mother Country.

I have no concern with divorce laws. It is not my business to advise adults. It is my concern, however, to study children, and it is important to suggest to parents that the home must be changed if the neurotic child is to stand any chance of recovery. I find that some children regress badly when they go home for holidays, and if the work of dealing with children were not so strenuous I should keep all children during the vacations. Parents must be bold enough if necessary to realise that their influence is bad for their children. One mother said to me: "But if I do not see my child for two years I shall lose him." "You have lost him already," I answered, and she had lost him, for he was unhappy at home. But it is a case of losing in order to find. When the child ultimately

goes home cured, that is, made happy, he can love his parents. Unhappiness means fundamentally unlovedness.

By to-day's post came a letter from the mother of a girl. This child ruled her home by violence. When she stormed the whole family cowered in a corner. The mother writes: "This year with you has worked wonders, and it is impossible to tell you how thankful we are to you. Violet is a perfect darling—I felt rather shaky the first day and expect she felt very much the same."

A vague spirit of honesty prompts me to close this chapter with another letter from a mother—"After thinking the matter over very carefully we have decided that Henry must go to a different school next term . . . I have spoken to several psychologists who agree with me that unless a child is abnormal and needs great help with complexes, he is bound to suffer after a time from a too slack and easy-going existence. A certain routine has its own appeal as boys get bigger and they like it and respond."

CHAPTER XV

CRIMINALITY IN THE CHILD

MANY psychologists believe that a child is born neither good nor bad, but with the tendencies to goodness and criminality. I follow Homer Lane in believing that there is no instinct of criminality and no natural tendency to badness. Criminality appears in a child as a perverted form of love. It springs from lack of love. A few days ago one of my pupils, a boy of nine, was playing a game and crooning to himself. He was crooning quite pleasantly the phrase: "I want to kill my mother." It was an unconscious crooning, for he was making a boat and all his conscious interest was in that. His mother lives her own life and seldom sees him. She obviously does not love him, and

unconsciously he knows it. "I want to kill my mother because she does not love me." But this boy, one of the most lovable of children, did not set out as a boy with criminal thoughts. It is simply the old story—if I can't get love I can get hate. That criminality and love are closely related is shown by a study of murder cases. The sex motive accounts for more cases of murder than the purely acquisitive motive.

I think that every case of criminality in a child can be traced to lack of love. One of my pupils, another boy of nine, has a phobia of poison; he fears that his mother will poison him. When she rises from the table he watches her every movement, and often he will say: "I know what you are after; you are going to get the poison for my food." I have not yet had the opportunity to find out what is behind it all, but I suspect it is a case of projection. Mother seemed to give more love to a brother, and it is probable that the neurotic son makes phantasies of poisoning both brother and mother. His fears are probably fears of retribution—"I

want to poison her and perhaps she will poison me in revenge."

Crime is obviously an expression of hate, and the study of criminality in children resolves itself into the study of why a child is led to hate. It is a question of injured ego. We cannot get away from the fact that a child is primarily an egoist. No one else matters. He cannot love; he can only want to be loved. Barrie's *Sentimental Tommy* is the eternal boy, and every boy is a Tommy crying: Look at me! Am I not clever? When the ego is satisfied we have what we call goodness; when the ego is starved we have what we call criminality. The criminal revenges himself on society because society has failed to appreciate his ego by showing love for him. Thus criminality is virtually confined to one class. If humans were born with an instinct for criminality there would be as many criminals in West End society as in the East End. The well-to-do people have many opportunities for expressions of the ego. Money and the pleasures it buys, refined surroundings,

culture, pride of birth all minister to the ego. Among the poor the ego is starved. Only a very few attain distinction—the bully, the termagant, the drunkard. To be in the dock is one method of attaining to distinction. I see in to-day's paper that Lord Haldane has joined the ranks of the people who believe that bad films make youths criminals. It appears to me to be a short-sighted view. No film ever corrupted anyone. Certainly a film might suggest a method to a youth, but the motive was there before the film came round. The film may make crime more artistic, but it cannot possibly suggest crime to anyone who has not contemplated crime. Personally, I find "bad" films most useful in showing me the tendencies of my pupils.

Crime is firstly a family affair, and secondly a community affair. Most of us have killed off our families in phantasy. I have one girl pupil who gives them most horrible deaths—especially her mother. Authority and jealousy are behind many murderous wishes. No child can stand authority. And since so many children are thwarted from the age of

four to sixteen I marvel that there are not more murderers in the world. Stekel says: *Hass ist Wille zur Macht und Liebe ist Wille zur Unterwerfung.* (Hate is the will to power, and love is the will to submission). But in a child the will to power is the will to be admired and loved. The child strives to compel admiration and attention. Thus we find criminal thoughts in introverted children, timid children who have no social gifts.

The plain little girl will weave horrible phantasies of sudden death while her pretty sister is dancing solo before guests. The extravert has no occasion for hate; he laughs and dances and talks, and the appreciation of his audience satisfies his ego desire to be admired. The introvert sits in a corner and dreams of what should be. The most introverted boy in my school takes no part in social evenings. He does not dance; he never sings; never takes part in a tumble game. In his lessons with me he tells me of a wonderful magician who serves him. He has only to say the word and the magician will give him a Rolls Royce. I told him a story one

day of a school voyage. The children were all wrecked on an island. He did not seem to like the story, and I asked him to amend it. "Make it that I was the only one saved," he said.

We are all familiar with this mechanism—the mechanism of climbing up by knocking the other fellow down. It is the psychology of the tale-bearer at school. "Please, sir, Tommy was swearing," means: "I don't swear; I am a good boy."

The difference between the person who kills rivals in phantasy and the criminal who kills rivals in reality is one of degree. In so far as we are all more or less starved of love we are all criminals. I sometimes flatter myself that I cure children of criminal phantasies by my psychological methods, but it is probable that the credit should go to love. To pretend that I love a new pupil would be fatuous, yet the child feels that I love him because I respect his ego.

Freedom to be oneself is the real cure for criminality. I learned that years ago when I went down to see Homer Lane's Little

Commonwealth. He gave delinquent children freedom to be themselves, and they became good automatically. In the slums their only method of satisfying their egos was to draw attention to themselves by anti-social behaviour. Lane told me that he saw some of them at their trials look proudly round the court. In a farming community they found new values, social values . . . that is good values.

To me the demonstration in that Dorset farm was convincing proof that there is no original will to criminality. I think of the new boy who ran away. Lane chased him and caught him. The boy, accustomed to cuffs, put up a protective arm. Lane smiled and slipped a sovereign into his hand.

"What's this for?" stammered the boy.

"Take the train home, man," said Lane; "don't walk."

The boy returned to the Commonwealth that night. I think of that way, and I think of the Industrial Schools I have seen. It is the law that makes the crime. The law at home voiced by father's forbidding commands

curbs the ego of the child, and in curbing it makes it bad. The law of the State merely revives the unconscious memories of the home restraint. Suppression awakes defiance, and defiance seeks naturally revenge. Criminality is revenge, and to abolish crime we must abolish the things that make a child want vengeance. We must show love and respect for the child.

CHAPTER XVI

THE HISTORY OF A FREE SCHOOL

IN the autumn of 1921, I joined others in founding the International School of Hellerau, near Dresden. The building was the beautiful school erected for Jacques Dalcroze in 1912, a building more like a theatre than a school. In 1921, the American wife of a Hellerau architect, Christine Baer, was carrying on a small class in Eurhythmics. In the building was a private school of about a hundred pupils. Difficulties sprang up from the very first. We had to get a new staff for the children's school, and I found myself in the position of a sleeping partner, for according to the Saxon laws I was not qualified to teach German children. Then we decided to make the school one of three divisions—Eurhythmic School, German Division,

and International Division. I was to direct the International School. I started with one pupil, Derrick, from Yorkshire. In course of time I had four English children, two Germans (smuggled in because they needed psychological treatment), one Russian, two Belgians, three Jugo-Slavs, one Norwegian. These children made a beautiful schoolroom by painting their own parts of the walls and roof. I cannot claim that the school was a success. The children were too old. Five of the girls were over fifteen, and when they found themselves free to do what they liked they failed. Again, language was a real difficulty. We all spoke German, but in the matter of literature we failed badly. It was impossible to form a library that would tempt Germans and Jugo-Slavs and Belgians and Norwegians. And the parents had no understanding of what we were trying to do. They sent their children to me mainly because I was English—as a Scot it took me some time to forgive being called an Engländer—and to be English in Central Europe is to be someone of importance. It was in a social sense that the school

was a success. At one time we had every nationality in Europe except Spanish and Portuguese. At a time when the French were entering the Ruhr we had French and German girls going about arm and arm. The interplay of nationals was a great education in itself. To-day Derrick can talk German like a native.

It was very early in the history of the school that differences arose between the German Division and myself. At this time I was in the position of being a millionaire, and my Ausländer fees were supporting the German Division. Our differences arose over—Education. The Germans had a free school, rather like King Alfred School, in London. A school with co-education, much freedom, no punishments, no rewards. But it contended that the school must mould the child. Thus in the hostel my group would of an evening dance upstairs to a gramophone, while downstairs the Head of the German Division read Goethe to his group. When his group sneaked upstairs to dance trouble began.

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We had long arguments, very long arguments. We remained friendly and we differed from each other politely. It was really a conflict between freedom and asceticism. The Germans did not smoke or drink or dance jazz or go to cinemas. I recall one of our meetings. I had bought a full-size Ica Cinematograph (I have it in Lyme Regis and wish someone would buy it!), and we sent out invitations to the village schools. We offered to give the children a performance once a week. We formed a committee of teachers and they selected Kultur films, that is films with a pedagogical message. Oh, how dull those films were! At our next meeting I protested, and suggested one Kultur film, followed by a Chaplin comedy. I had not the moral courage to suggest a Harold Lloyd, followed by a Charlie Chaplin. The meeting rose on me, and shouted that the children must have nothing but Kultur films. I was unthinking enough to ask: What is Kultur? It was a very long meeting.

Again I found that the German teachers knew nothing about modern psychology.

Psychology to them meant Wundt. They read heavy volumes on Pedagogy, and technically their teaching of subjects was excellent. Their interest was in education, not in children. They had a scheme of life, and they tried to make the child fit into it. It was their belief that children would grow up properly if their teachers were examples to them—did not smoke, nor drink, nor dance. They were excellent people with fine ideals, only I think that they were wrong. They were wrong because they depended on educating the conscious mind of a child. To read Goethe to a child who would rather be catching minnows is a psychological mistake. To give a child ideals is a dangerous thing to do. No man is good enough to give another his own ideals. In our division we took the other way. Derrick, aged eight then, began to smoke cigarettes. An English visitor, thinking to cure him, gave him an evil black cigar. Derrick smoked it—and asked for another. To-day Derrick, aged twelve, never smokes at all. We allowed him to form his own ideals about tobacco as about everything else. I

see no other way, if the new generation is to go ahead of us. At one of the famous co-educational schools in Germany the children have to listen to Bach music every morning before breakfast. An English boy told me the story with great indignation, for he was a musician and liked only very modern music. Moulding taste is an underhand way of moulding character. Friends of mine have smiled at this story of Bach, friends who support the compulsory games at our Public Schools.

Life was very full in Hellerau. I remember the morning when the District Chief of Police drove up and interviewed me. It was at the time when the French had entered the Ruhr.

"You have three Belgians in the school," he said, and I admitted it.

"We are going to send them home," he continued, "as a protest against the Ruhr invasion."

"You can," I said, "but if you do I'll close this school to-morrow. This is an International School. We have no politics. Our interest is in children only. And you dare

not close the school. We support over a hundred German children on fees from countries with a good exchange, and if we close down the Education Ministry will have something to say about it."

The Belgians were allowed to remain.

I took an impartial line during the time of the Ruhr invasion. I collected in England a good sum of money for the children of the Ruhr who were in want, and there was much privation at that time. I sided with German children and Belgian children. The sequel to all this is of interest. When the school finally broke up mainly as a result of the fall of the mark, our business manager came to me and implored me to find him a job abroad. He knew Spanish well. I wrote to a South American business man I had met in Vienna, asking him if he could help my friend. The South American had moved on to Paris, and he at once wrote telling our manager to come to Paris for an interview. In great hope our man went off to get a visa from the French Consul in Dresden. When the Consul learned that the applicant came from the Hellerau

School he said: "You can't get a visa. It was your school that raised money for the Ruhr children."

"No," was the answer, "the school did not. It was one of your allies, Mr. Neill, who raised the money."

"He did not think of raising money for the Reparations," growled the Consul. "Good morning."

My friend, a decent young Saxon with a wife and family, lost the chance of getting a position. I hear that he is still unemployed.

The cultural atmosphere of Hellerau was an education in itself. The best artists of Europe used to visit us, and we were continually meeting people of interest. The Eurhythmic Division gave many dance performances. They gave the ballet from *Orpheus* and then jumped to the modern extreme and danced Bartok's *Der Holzgeschnitzte Prinz*. The children lived in an atmosphere of colour and rhythm, and to-day I notice that the children who were with me in Hellerau show an artistry that the later children do not show. If someone plays a Chopin ballade the former

children move rhythmically to the music, while the other children jump about clumsily.

And the music of Hellerau was such as one cannot find in England. Our woodwork teacher, a village carpenter, would spend hours playing Beethoven. Walther Lang, one of the teachers in the Rhythmus Division, now a professor of music in Zürich, gave us many a delightful evening at the piano. Then we were near to Dresden Opera and Symphony Concerts. I grant that the younger children preferred ragtime to sonatas, but the older pupils came to love good music, and, unconsciously, the younger children must have been touched by good music. But we did not set out to teach Kultur. We fox-trotted much. The Germans could not understand us. A boy of twelve said to me: "I think it awful. Lang can play fine music and here he is playing a one-step. It is the opposite of Kultur," and, as a protest, he left the hall and went home. The Germans could not understand that life contains operas and music-hall ditties, Goethe and Charlie Chaplin. They wanted to make clean-cut divisions

—this man likes Chopin; that man jazz: they could not allow a man to like both. Of course they were wrong when they applied their views to the education of children. The child must have the freedom to choose his own ideals. A friend of mine, a novelist whose works will be immortal, can read a cheap detective story with great pleasure. That is what I call culture, the ability to appreciate everything in life. There are Higher Taste educationists in England, but Germany is the worst sinner in Europe.

The school broke up, and the dear old Schulheim passed into other hands. The new people at once erected a barb-wire fence round it, a symbol that freedom had gone from Hellerau. The financial situation forced me to seek a new school outside of Germany. My friend, Dr. Menke-Glückert, the head of the Education Ministry for Saxony, tried hard to find me a building in Dresden, but I knew that Germany was at that time too unsafe. We were expecting revolution daily, and the Ausländer parents were telegraphing their children home. It was an ugly time. I hate

to think of the day when in Dresden I was mistaken for a Frenchman. When the crowd gathered that I was a Scot they cheered me instead of mobbing me.

I went to Vienna. After many weeks of fruitless search for a house I was offered a part of the hostel belonging to the Young Men's Movement, *Das Akademische Wohlfahrts-Werk*. I shall always look back with gratitude to this group of young men. The secretary, Oskar Bock, a man who sacrifices all for the movement, gave me, a stranger to him, help that was Christian. The hostel stood in Lower Austria on the top of Sonntagsberg, two and a half thousand feet high. Here I settled down with my group of International children, a group sadly reduced in numbers. I soon found out that it was the last place on earth for a free school. On the summit was a church of pilgrimage, and thousands of Catholics came from the ends of Europe. I had just had a very bad case sent to me, a boy who was an incendiary, a thief, a sadist. For six months I had to shadow that boy every hour of the day. His first act on

his arrival was to snowball a holy image on the wayside. The Lower Austrian peasants are the most disagreeable people I have ever seen. I think they hated us because we were not Catholics. We used to bathe in a pond. The peasants went and threw broken bottles into it. They were continually reporting us to the police. One morning a policeman came to the door. He fixed his bayonet and came into the house. He read out a long statement. Someone had complained that one of my pupils, a girl of nine, had been seen on the road in a bathing costume. Also a boy pupil, sleeping on the balcony, had been seen in the early morning to climb over to another balcony and throw himself into the bed of a female figure. This could not go on; we were shocking the moral susceptibilities of a religious community.

I had to admit the crime of allowing a girl to appear in a bathing costume. I explained that the boy who climbed the balcony was eleven and that the female figure was a teacher, aged thirty. I then asked what the religious susceptibilities of the community

thought of the pilgrims who openly used the side of the road as lavatories. The poor policeman could not answer.

To the local difficulties was added the official difficulty. In Vienna I had spent days calling on the officials of the Education Office, asking them if I could set up a private school in Austria. They were very nice. Each man gave the same answer—"I certainly have no objection, but you had better go to Herr So-and-So on the next flat." Herr So-and-So sent me to a higher flat, until ultimately I reached a man on the top flat. He seemed quite agreeable that I should set up my school, and I came downstairs satisfied. But I had not been long in Sonntagsberg when the local education authority began to inquire what I was doing. Had I religious instruction? No, I had no religious instruction. But I must have religious instruction. I must, moreover, employ a teacher qualified to give religious instruction. "And the children must all sit the State examinations . . . Oh yes, I admit that they are nearly all English children, but the laws of Austria are

as follows:" and the inspector took up a heavy code book.

After six months of difficulties I decided to give the school up and return to England. The fact that owing to a bank failure in Vienna I lost all my school savings contributed to my decision. But they were wonderful six months. We had a view of a hundred miles of plain on one side and of rolling mountains on the other. For two months we lived on skis. In the heat of the day we could ski in bathing costume, although none of us was courageous enough to try the heat of local opinion. The storms were terrible storms. If you were caught in a thunderstorm you had to lie down, for the gale was impossible to stand up against. The climb up took about eighty minutes, but I recall one snowstorm when I took five hours to reach the top.

We were almost completely isolated, and we sadly missed the crowd life of Hellerau. Children require to live in a grown-up community. As the fine weather came visitors came to us. We had Edwin Muir and his

gifted wife; we had Swedes and Americans and Hungarians and Germans. Our musical carpenter, Sepp, followed us and brought back the music that we had missed.

It was an experience for the children to live on the top of a mountain. All provisions had to be dragged up by oxen or carried by mule. The postman came twice a week. Newspapers we saw about once a month. The children suffered no inconvenience from the primitive state of post and living. A mountain top was a paradise to them.

In Lyme Regis we have our newspapers and our post. I have my favourite tobacco—how vile was the tobacco of Germany and Austria! But life here is a narrower life. We miss the snow, the sun, the interplay of nationality, the music, the art of Central Europe. One day I shall go back there with my school. One cannot carry out internationalism in England. To feel and think internationally is a necessity. In a few years the world will probably be faced with another great war. To feel internationally is to be an enemy of war. When a boy has lived and played with

German boys he will never be led away by the dishonest propaganda of war time. Ignorance fosters militarism. I once travelled from Munich to Dresden in a compartment in which was a young Nationalist. He showed me his revolvers and brandishing them he cried: "We'll fight France in a few months' time." We got quite friendly—I always make friends with a man who carries revolvers—and he talked much. He was one of the most ignorant students I have ever met. Had he spent his boyhood playing with French boys he could not have been an extreme Nationalist.

One of my daydreams is a dream of a caravan school that moves about Europe. Two years ago I wrote to Henry Ford suggesting that his factory might, between ten o'clock and lunch time, turn out two caravans for my school. The compliment to his factory methods did not have any effect. The daydream of a ship school I have sternly repressed as being likely to remain for ever a daydream. But the caravans may yet materialise.

Meanwhile the free school continues in the quiet of Lyme Regis. England is still the freest country in the world. No official drives up to ask whether the children have religious instruction. And the English people are more tolerant of children than are the Germans. The Germans admire a well-behaved boy who is seen and not heard, but the English admire a boy who shows initiative and recklessness. It is to me delightful to think that only one inhabitant of Lyme Regis has ever had to complain about the conduct of my problem pupils. Boys and girls are free to go where they like, free to do what they like, and yet they never seem to behave as the proverbial problem children behave. They never stone telegraph-poles, never trespass on orchards, never chase cats with bricks. Truly it is the law that makes the crime. Freedom does not make children good, it simply allows them to be good.

CHAPTER XVII

THE PHILOSOPHY OF FREEDOM

A MAN speaks from his complexes, that is his limitations. I am probably interested in criminality because I am unconsciously a criminal. It is possible to advocate a good cause from a bad motive. Thus a man who is an unconscious Peeping Tom may join a society for the sexual enlightenment of children. A homosexual may take up teaching, making the rationalisation that he wants to help boys. I am not denying the higher motives, but I think it well that we should face the probability of lower motives. I use the term lower wrongly; I mean infantile as opposed to adult motives.

So, in propounding a gospel of freedom for the child I am conscious that the foundation of the gospel is subjective. My interest in

freedom began as a protest against the authority of my childhood. Rather it began as an over-protest, but after years the over-protest has become mellowed. It is probable that I now value freedom for its own sake, not as a protest against authority. Still in matters of psychology we never can be sure. I found myself yesterday being irritated at a woman who was trying to persuade her son to bathe. That is a personal matter. I have always found that what I have done through persuasion has been unsatisfactory. No one can persuade the unconscious. The conscious may obey, but the unconscious will protest. No man can be converted by persuasion. The man who changes the religion of his childhood never gives up that religion entirely.

So, in giving children freedom, I am setting out from a complex. Hating persuasion and suggestion, I arrange that no child in my school shall be persuaded to do anything. That the school community persuades Jimmy that he will get a thick ear if he does not stop throwing stones is no concern of mine. It is the law of counter-suggestion. Jimmy goes

out from the standpoint that the other children can be persuaded to be afraid through his stone-throwing, and the other children rightly use counter-persuasion. That is social education—that one must live and let live. In our general educational policy as a nation we refuse to let live. We persuade at the point of the cane. But there is a great difference between compelling a child to cease stone-throwing and compelling him to learn Latin. Stone-throwing involves others, but learning Latin involves only the boy. The community has the right to restrain the anti-social boy because he is interfering with the rights of others, but the community has no right to compel a boy to learn Latin, for learning Latin is a matter of an individual soul. It is on a par with forcing a man to adopt a religion by Act of Parliament. And it is equally foolish. I learned Latin as a boy, rather I was given Latin books to learn from. I could never learn the stuff because my interests were elsewhere—in minnow-catching etc. At the age of twenty-one I found that I could not enter the university without Latin,

and in less than a year I learned enough Latin to pass the Prelim. Incidentally I acquired a real affection for the *Aeneid*. Self-interest made me learn Latin. In our schools we try to bring in the self-interest element by giving prizes and punishments, but the false aim is not attractive enough.

I emphasise the importance of self-interest in life. However we may rationalise to the contrary, we are egoists first and foremost, and if self-interest is not satisfied all work and duty is a failure. We must allow the child to be selfish in individual things if not in social things. That is another way of saying that he must be free to follow his interests. When the individual and the social interests clash the individual interests should be allowed precedence. When Willie makes mud pies his mother is alarmed lest the neighbours criticise his dirty clothes. In this case the social claim—what society thinks—must give way to the individual claim—the joy of playing and making. To give freedom is to allow the child to live his own life, and thus expressed it seems simple. Only our disastrous

habit of teaching renders us incapable of realising the simplicity of freedom. I have written the words many times and I write them again: No man is good enough to tell another how to live. No man is wise enough to guide another's footsteps.

The arch-enemy of freedom is fear. If we tell children about sex will they not become licentious? If we do not censor plays will the people not become immoral? Censorship is the resort of the weak and ignorant. It is Nietzsche's "Saying nay to life"; it is death. The adults who fear that youth will be corrupted are those who are themselves corrupt, just as the dirty-minded people demand that we should all wear double-piece bathing costumes. If a man is shocked by anything it is by the thing that he is most interested in. The prude is a libertine without the courage to face his naked soul. But freedom means the conquest of ignorance. A free people would need no censor of plays or costumes, for a free people would have no interest in shocking things because a free people could not be shocked. My pupils are unshockable,

not because they are advanced in sin, but because they have lived out their interests in shocking things and have no more use for them as subjects of conversation or wit. Censorship is feeble in this way that it does not protect anyone. Take James Joyce's book *Ulysses*, forbidden in England but purchasable in Paris or Vienna. In it are words usually described as obscene. The innocent reading the book would not understand the words, while the sophisticated, knowing them already, could not be corrupted. And one can still buy *Tom Jones*. I wonder why.

There is the vexed question of a child's reading. The *Verbot* always makes the child read the book on the sly. I remember a headmaster criticising me because I introduced *The Prisoner of Zenda* into the school library. Surprised, I asked why, and he told me that the opening chapters dealt with illegitimacy. I had read the book twice and had not noticed the fact. Children seem to have cleaner minds than we adults have, for a boy can read *Tom Jones* and fail to see the obscene passages. Dickens expresses

this truth in *David Copperfield*. I am of opinion that there should be no book censorship for children. If we free the child from ignorance about sex we destroy any danger in any book. A new pupil of mine, a girl of fourteen, took *A Young Girl's Diary* from my bookshelf and I saw her sit and snigger over it. Six months later she read it a second time and told me that it was rather dull. What had been spicy to ignorance had become commonplace to knowledge. This girl came to me with a dirty ignorance whispered in classroom corners, and of course I cleared her up about sex matters.

It is when we leave sex and go to fear that censorship in books becomes more difficult to judge. Such a terrifying book as Bram Stoker's *Dracula* might have a sad effect on a neurotic child, and I should not leave this book deliberately in the way of such a child. Yet because my work is to try to analyse away the roots of fears I should not forbid a child to read it. I should attack the symptoms raised by the reading of the book. I recall, as a child, being terrified by

the Bible story of the children who were eaten by bears, yet no one advocates the censorship of the Bible. Many children read the Bible searching for obscene passages. As a small boy I knew them all, chapter and verse, and it strikes me now that my fear of the bears may have been the result of my conscience pricks concerning other parts of the Bible.

We are inclined to exaggerate the effect of blood stories on children. Most children can enjoy the most sadistic tales, and on Sunday nights, when I tell my pupils the story of their own adventures, they jump with joy when I boil them alive. It is the supernatural story that is most likely to terrify. Most children fear ghosts, and children of religious homes find terror in ghost stories. Here, as in sex matters, the proper method is to abolish the fear rather than to censor the book. I grant that it is difficult to lay ghosts in the soul, but the teacher or doctor must try to lay them. The parent's duty is to see that the ghosts do not enter the child's soul.

To give a child freedom is not easy. It means that we refuse to teach him religion or

politics or class-consciousness. It is difficult because each adult has his own environment. Thus a child cannot have real freedom when he hears his father thunder against the Communists or the Militarists; hears his mother storm against the servant class. A new girl proclaimed the fact that she was a Conservative because Daddy was one. Six months later she said that she was Labour. I never mention politics in school or out of it, partly because I have now no interest in politics. How Mary came to associate Labour with her new environment I do not know, but I feel that it was a compliment to Labour. It is well nigh impossible to keep the children from adopting our attitude to life. The son of a butcher will not be likely to preach vegetarianism from a soap-box, unless fear of his father's authority drives him into opposition. An Eton boy is not likely to be a strong advocate of co-education. The very nature of society is inimical to freedom. Society, that is the crowd, is conservative and hateful towards new thought. Fashion typifies the crowd's dislike of freedom. The individual

who is behind the fashions or is ahead of the times is sent to Coventry. The crowd demands uniformity. In Lyme Regis I am a crank because I wear sandals; in a village I would be a crank if I wore a tall hat. English society is more inimical to individual freedom than is Continental society. Few Englishmen dare to depart from the "correct thing." To-day a London ballroom symbolises for me the whole of England. Dancing, which should be an individual, a creative pleasure, is in London a stiff walk. One couple dances like another couple. Crowd conservatism along with a crowded floor prevents any dancer from being original. But the joy of dancing is the joy of invention; when invention is left out it becomes a mechanical dulness. English dancing expresses fully the English fear of emotion, the fear of originality, of newness. And if there is no room for freedom in a pleasure we cannot expect to have room for freedom in more serious parts of life. If one dare not invent his own foxtrot steps it is unlikely that he will be tolerated if he dares to invent his own religious or educational or political steps.

On with the dance! But it must be danced according to the rules. And the strange thing is that the crowd will accept the rules as a crowd, while at the same time the individuals composing the crowd may be unanimous in hating the rules. The law, which is the law of the crowd we call the nation, forbids the buying of cigarettes after eight o'clock at night, but I cannot think that one individual approves of this law. As individuals we calmly accept crowd rulings that are stupid or worse than stupid. We allow a minority crowd, the motorists, to make public highways places of danger; we leave it to a very small crowd to broadcast any music they care to offer us; we spend public money on the means of death and destruction, warships and aeroplanes, while we leave the healing of the sick to private charity. Few individuals in the country would care to take the responsibility of hanging a murderer or of sending a criminal to the living death we call prison. The crowd can retain such barbarities as capital punishment and our prison system without conscience, for the crowd has no conscience. As the crowd

psychologists say, the crowd cannot think; it can only feel. To the crowd the criminal is a danger, and the easiest way of protection is to kill or lock up the danger. Our obsolete criminal code is based fundamentally on fear, and our suppressive system of education is fundamentally based on fear—fear of the new generation. Sir Martin Conway in his delightful book, *The Crowd in Peace and War*, points out that the crowd likes old men. In war it chooses old generals; in peace it prefers old doctors. It clings to the old because it fears the young. The instinct of self-preservation in a crowd sees in the new generation a danger, the danger of having a new, rival crowd grow up, a crowd that may conceivably destroy the old crowd. In the smallest crowd of all, the family, freedom is denied to the young for the same reason. The adults cling to old values. These are emotional values. There is no logical basis for a father's prohibiting his twenty-year-old daughter from smoking. The prohibition springs from emotional sources, from conservative sources. At the back of the prohibition is the fear: What may she do next?

The crowd is the guardian of morality; it is an institution led by Mr. and Mrs. Grundy. The adult fears to give freedom to the young because he fears that the young may do in deed all the things that he, the adult, has wanted to do. It is a commonplace that the apostles of pure plays, adequate bathing-costumes, decent films, are men and women of prurient thoughts. Their morality is based on unconscious perversions. A reformer is always subjective. If I write a book on Abnormal Sexuality my own sexuality is abnormal. Writers on Criminology are unconscious criminals (I think that all writers are unconscious criminals). Pacifists are warlike persons—anyone can prove this statement by attending a Pacifist Congress. I realise that I lay myself open to the gibe that everything is not what it seems but the very opposite. To say that Hobbs likes cricket consciously and hates it unconsciously is to say what is ludicrous. Hobbs is a doer not a preacher. If he began to go round England preaching cricket as a salvation he would at once be suspect as hating cricket and himself. It is the preacher who

must be suspected, the reformer. Years ago I created a teacher called Macdonald. He was all that I was not—a child beater, a disciplinarian, a believer in subjects. I created him in order to knock him over. Later I found it a sad business to realise that Macdonald was myself. We are all partly Jekyll and partly Hyde. When one part is trying to reform the other we take the conflict out of doors and we write books, or preach sermons, or teach temperance. There are other elements in reforming—the love of being in the limelight, being, perhaps, one of the strongest. I refuse to admit what might be called higher motives—the godlike desire to save souls, the resolution to make the world better. I reject them because they do not allow for self-interest. A godlike person has no time for preaching. I fancy such a being would keep bees or grow cabbages.

The granting of freedom to the children may have the happy result of abolishing reformation. Certainly, if we could have children grow up without complexes we should have a race of men and women who would have no

desire to reform, for the simple reason that they would have nothing in themselves to reform. They would do and not talk; they would live and let live. I like to phantasy a Utopia without reformers—no prohibitionists, no evangelists, no censorists, no education-reformers, no pacifists, no militarists, no ists of any kind. Maybe in a thousand years people will really live and really let live.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE PRACTICE OF PSYCHOLOGY

SHOULD a child be psycho-analysed? Before we can answer this question we must define the term Psycho-analysis. Psycho-analysis is the name for the technical process by which a Freudian makes what is unconscious conscious. The patient talks freely about anything that comes to his mind; he relates his dreams and the associations they call up. The analyst's aim is to let the patient discover his unconscious processes, and he is really a guide who keeps the patient on the lines. The more the patient finds out for himself the better is his cure. The analyst offers no suggestions, preaches no creed. He is a scientist who gives the patient a portrait of himself; rather he watches the patient paint his own portrait, drawing the patient's attention to what is important.

The Jungians practise psycho-synthesis. They show the patient his inner trends, and try to make him adapt himself to the present and the future. Freud is a psychologist, and Jung is a philosopher. Freud clears away the rubbish that is keeping a man from building his house, while Jung considers the rubbish to be of minor moment, and helps the man to build his house. Suggestion is apt to creep into the Jungian method, whereas Freudianism aims at eliminating suggestion. Again the Jungians deal more with subjective psychology than do the Freudians. The Freudian patient dreams of a black dog and discovers by analysis, that a black dog attacked him when he was two. To the Jungian the black dog is so much libido that has gone astray; it is a black dog in the soul.

I feel very strongly that Freudianism is a much more healthy thing for children than is Jungianism. Children should never learn anything about their souls; their treatment should deal with those objective things that are holding the child back. Moreover, I think that psycho-analysis proper should not

be applied to a child. He should not be introduced to a confused world of symbolisms. The doctor or teacher should certainly note the symbolism that a child uses, but he should use it in such a way that the child does not realise that his own symbolism is being interpreted.

When I saw a little boy torturing a little dog I thought of the boy's little brother, Jim, and I remarked: "What's the dog's name? Jimmy?" The boy ceased torturing the dog, and I conjecture that my guess was right, that the dog was a symbol for a rival brother. But if the dog had stood for someone else there would have been no reaction; he would have continued to tease the dog.

I am strongly of the opinion that a child should not be analysed unless the case is a bad one, and I find that gradually my private lessons with children have become a re-education rather than an analysis. I find that my chief work is to sit still and approve of all the things that a child disapproves of in himself; that is, I try to break down the child's superimposed conscience. A new boy sits and

swears—and I smile and say: "Carry on! Nothing bad about swearing." So with masturbation, lying, stealing. At the moment I have a biggish boy who is psychically three or four. He steals from shops. I am considering going down to a shop with him and stealing in his presence (after being cowardly enough to square the shopkeeper first). To him I am father and God, and I am inclined to think that father's disapproval has a lot to do with his stealing. My idea is that if he sees his new Father-God stealing he will be compelled to revise his conscience about stealing. I fully expect him to protest vigorously.

I see no other method possible than the one I am using. Neurosis is the result of a conflict between good and bad, between God and conscience (voice of moral instruction). I find invariably that the weakening of this false conscience makes the child happier and better. Abolish a boy's conscience and you will cure him of thieving. Lately I have talked with other schoolmasters about their fruit gardens. They told me that their children took most of the fruit. I have a

large garden filled with fruit trees and bushes, but the children have not stolen the fruit. Two boys were tried by the *Schulgemeinde* for fruit pinching. They were new boys. Considering that my pupils are mostly so-called Difficult children it is significant that fruit is left alone. When their consciences are abolished the two new boys will certainly have no interest in stealing fruit. Every day makes me more convinced than ever that evil is caused by morality. A few years ago I had three new girl pupils who passed through the usual stage of talking out forbidden topics. Later a new girl came. This new girl complained to me one day that the three other girls were dreadfully dull companions. "When I talk about sex things in the bedroom at night they tell me to shut up, and they say they have no interest in sex things." It was true. They naturally had an interest in sex things, but not in sex in its hidden aspect. These girls had had their conscience about sex (as a dirty subject) destroyed, and to a new girl fresh from the sex talk of a girls' school they appeared to be highly moral.

And they really were highly moral, for their new morality was founded on knowledge not on an outside standard of good and bad.

Dr. Maurice Nicoll once remarked to me that psychology is a life sentence. It certainly is. A few make money out of it, but many are not making money. It is dangerous work—not dangerous for the patient so much as for the doctor. For the doctor, be he physician, parson or teacher, who practises psychology is likely to find himself in conflict with old standards. A psychologist can have his life's work ruined by any neurotic patient who libels him. I think of three men who were ruined in this way. This brings up the question of psychology being used for base purposes. I cannot believe that it is. Pseudo-psychology may be used for commercial purposes, for one hears of advertisements in America—Learn Psycho-analysis and Double your Income in Six Weeks. But I cannot believe that psychology is ever used for lower motives. Certainly a little knowledge of psychology might help a Don Juan in his conquests, but if he went far enough into

psychology he would cease to be a Don Juan. There is such a thing as a professional conscience, and every professional man knows it. Moreover, if a psychologist were a roué his commonsense would prevent his experimenting with neurotic patients.

The chief danger to the psychologist comes from the circumstance that he must deal with sex matters. Only the music-halls are allowed to deal with sex with public approval. The public that will applaud a suggestive joke on the stage will criticise any doctor or teacher who has to deal scientifically with sex. And the psychologist seems to draw interest to himself. It is the familiar mechanism of transference. I have heard ugly stories about some of the best known psychologists in London and Vienna. Recently a doctor recommended my school to the mother of a neurotic girl. The mother in horror cried: "That man! Never! Don't you know that he was the chief figure in a case of homosexuality in a German court?" Because I never saw the inside of a German court I took care to lay this libel with a heavy hand.

The sad truth is that most people read into psychology what they want to see in it. A perverted man might smile knowingly when told that a certain stranger was a specialist in midwifery. The public that is most bitter against psycho-analysis is the public that cries: "Sex in it! The men who practise it must be men with dirty minds." It is strange that no one has ever accused priests, who hear many confessions relating to sex, of being bad men.

I do not want to give the impression that psychologists are supermen; men beyond human frailties. When one hears the acrimonious conversations that take place between doctors of rival schools of psychology one laughingly realises that psychologists are very human individuals. I am trying to show why the psychologist is likely to be more severely judged than any other professional man. His practice makes him loved and hated. Dr. Hug Hellmuth, a well-known Viennese analyst, wrote a book called *The Sexual Life of the Child*. In it she often mentioned her baby nephew. Last summer the nephew,

become a youth in his teens, strangled his aunt. One boy, hating me, tried to brain me with a hammer. But it is a hopeful aspect of human life that hate is much less seldom expressed than love. If it were otherwise analysts would be killed off like flies. Now when we consider the case of slander raised by strangers about the psychologist we recognise the same mechanism of a love and hate transference. People acquire transferences to a man who lectures on psychology. I recall giving a course of lectures abroad. At the end a lady whom I scarcely knew to speak to, came to me and told me that she loved me. When she added: "I have written and told my husband and he is coming to shoot you," I trembled, although I could not repress a smile at the idea of being shot for a woman I didn't care about. The husband never came. I think that the mechanism of this transference was something like this: "He has mentioned in his lecture lots of things that apply to me. He was really addressing me. He must know my thoughts; he must love me." It is probable that if the lady had read my

lectures and had never seen me, her transference would have been a hate one—"He knows my evil thoughts. I hate him."

Students of psychology are familiar with the mechanism of projection. The sinner projects his fault, and sees it in the other fellow. Thus we project our criminality on to the burglar, and hate and fear our own evil in him. We project our dishonesty on to the tramp and watch him carefully as he passes the hen-roost. It would appear that the psychologist has joined the ranks of the burglar and the tramp as whipping-boy for the projectionist. Society is now projecting its eroticism on to the psycho-analyst. Even the British Medical Association has recently criticised one of its members for enlightening a girl patient on sex matters.

What the future of psychology will be no one knows. At the moment there is a difference of opinion about the practice of psychology. Some hold that curing neurosis should be the doctor's province and not the teacher's. In a manner of speaking, it is to-day the province of neither, for there is no training in

psychology in the medical or in the scholastic curriculum. True, there is the degree of B.Sc. Psychology at our universities, but the degree is given chiefly for Experimental Psychology work, and the new dynamic psychology of the unconscious is almost left out. It is possible to be a B.Sc. of Psychology and yet to have no knowledge of the causes of stealing or bed-wetting. To-day the practitioners of psychology are technically quacks in so far as they have no official training. I am inclined to think that psychology will have a training and a degree of its own one day. We must remember that it is still at the bronze age. The warring schools—Adlerian, Freudian, Jungian—must finish their disputes before we can make psychology an academic thing.

Meanwhile there is nothing to do but to carry on. There are many children in the world who need treatment, and we teachers and our doctor friends are doing these children ill by differing among ourselves. As I remarked in my introduction, we none of us know much about psychology. When a

serious-minded visitor asked me if I thought my school was a success, I laughed and answered: "I think so but I hate to say so for I don't know how many of them will end on the gallows." Yet we can only attempt to do what we think good. One of our special dangers is that we are apt to develop a Saviour complex, for the healer of souls easily identifies himself with the Christ. There he is in good company, for every preacher must have a Christ identification.

There is one aspect of child treatment that is of great importance. In my own case I am both teacher and psychologist, and I am slowly discovering that a man cannot play the two parts. I have had to give up teaching, for the pupils could do no work with the man who was their father confessor. They became irritated and were always very much afraid of my criticism of work. Moreover, if I praised a drawing I evoked much jealousy. Really the psychic doctor should not live in the school at all. The children should have no social interest in him. I have already instanced the case of the girl who kicked me for

a whole evening. As I have written this chapter a boy of nine has come into my room six times on flimsy pretexts. He wants to see that I am still alive no doubt. I never have a free moment; I am alternately stroked and pinched. When I make enough money I shall have a psychologist who lives outside the school, and I shall return to my original work of teaching, but even then I suppose I shall suffer the pinches that are really intended for the wicked doctor who tells home-truths. Perhaps this is a rationalisation; perhaps my main motive is to get rid of the task of dealing with difficult children and their warped souls. For it is exhausting work. Clearing away rubbish is never anything else but toil. Work of this kind is made tolerable only by the delight of seeing an unhappy child become happy and free. The other side of the picture is the long, tiresome study, with no apparent success appearing. One will work with a child for a year, and at the end of it be overjoyed to think that the lad is cured of stealing. Then one day the lad relapses—and the teacher almost despairs. I have patted myself on

the back and five minutes later have had a teacher rush in and say: "Tommy has been stealing again." And yet psychology is rather like golf; you may take two hundred to a round, you may swear and break your clubs, but in the sunny morning you will walk again to the first tee with hope in your heart.

On glancing back over these last pages I think I detect a note of melancholy, if not pessimism. This may be the result of the news of the death of two men who have done pioneer work with children. Homer Lane, the greatest intuitional genius that I have known, and Norman MacMunn, the author of *The Path to Freedom in the School.* I knew both of them well. To Lane I owe more than I can express, for it was my visit to his Little Commonwealth that inspired me to work for unhappy children. It was he who gave me the philosophy of original virtue.

MacMunn, of Tiptree Hall, was a man who had his own ideas of freedom in the school. He gave freedom without giving personal treatment to individuals. It was always a joy to meet him. His attitude to children

was delightful, and all children loved him. Two good men lost to education—but that is not of importance. What is sad is that two friends have been lost to children. For children do not need teaching; they need love and understanding; they need freedom to be good. It is the parent who has the most power to give children freedom to be good. The world is suffering from too much condemnation, really a euphemistic way of saying that the world is suffering from too much hate. It is the parents' hate that makes a child a problem, just as it is society's hate that makes the criminal a problem. Salvation lies in love, but because no one can compel love the world has only one hope—to learn charity. Maybe charity is love. I do not know.

To learn charity is first of all to question oneself. "Charity begins at home." Introspection is the beginning of charity, if not of wisdom. The parent of the problem child must sit down and ask himself or herself the question: "Have I shown charity to my child? Have I shown trust? Have I shown understanding?

I am not theorising. I know that a problem child can come to my school and become a happy, normal child. I know that the chief element in the process of cure is the showing of charity, of trust, of understanding. Knowing then that the difficult child can be cured, I express the earnest hope that more knowledge of self and of child nature will help parents to keep their children free from neurosis. I repeat that parents are spoiling their children's lives by forcing on them past beliefs, past manners, past morals. They are sacrificing the child to the past. This is especially true of those parents who impose religion on their children. Parent and child: Yesterday and to-morrow. I know well that the most difficult thing in the world is to renounce, but it is only through renunciation that we find life and progress and happiness. The parent of the problem child must renounce: must renounce hate that is disguised as authority and criticism; must renounce intolerance that is the outcome of fear of new things; must renounce mob morals and mob verdicts. Or more simply, the parent must

become an individual. It is not easy. A man is not himself; he is a combination of everyone he has met. Parents impose the authority of their own parents because every man has in him his own father, every woman her own mother. The joke about Mr. Newlywed's lack of tact in praising the scones that his mother used to make is more than a joke. It illustrates a profound truth, the truth that mother's scones always remain the best. It is thus that we seek old values—and turn our children into problems. Parents must renounce the Old Adam—in their case Solomon the Wise, who uttered the stupidity that has done most harm to children in the world.

My motto in education as in life is: For God's sake let people live their own lives. It is an attitude that fits any situation with the possible exception of the one in which a burglar goes round with a knife. This attitude is the only possible attitude that affords toleration. It is strange that the word toleration has not occurred to me before. It is the proper word for a free school; we are leading the children to be tolerant by showing them

tolerance. To be tolerant is to have charity. Again and again I keep coming back to Jesus Christ, the Man who had charity. Years ago Charles M. Sheldon wrote a book called *What Would Jesus Do?* I have forgotten the contents of the book, but I sometimes find myself asking: What would Jesus do? Would He see obscenity in nakedness? Would He see the devil in the criminal? Would He censor plays and films? Would He condemn an Oscar Wilde? Would He make little children unhappy?

THE END

APPENDIX.

It is now four years since the first edition of this book appeared. During these four years life has been full of children, problem and normal; so full that I have had neither time nor energy to write books about children. And naturally the question has been put to me again and again: "Has experience led you to modify your views about the Problem Child?" Experience has shown me much that is new to me, but experience has not affected principles. I am sure that I would not cancel a line of this book.

My previous view of the child remains the same, but possibly I have become more charitable to the parent. The Problem Parent is just as real as the Problem Child.

As the years go on I see more and more clearly that the problem child is very much the product of the personal problem that the parent has projected. The unrealised motive: "I shall live my life again in my child" would not be so harmful if the words " . . . and live it differently" were not always added. The parent has such a tremendous power over the child. The parent speaks with the voice of God. One sees this vividly in parental statements about masturbation. What mother says about sex is holy writ. The child accepts the suggestion wholely. One mother told her son that masturbation would make him stupid. He accepted the suggestion, and became incapable of learning anything. When his mother was persuaded to tell him that she had told him nonsense he automatically became a clever boy. Another mother told her boy that all people would hate him if he masturbated. The boy became what mother's suggestion indicated; he was the most unlikeable lad in the school. He stole and spat at people, and broke things in his

pathetic attempts to live up to mother's suggestion. In this case the mother could not be persuaded to confess her previous error, and the boy remained more or less a hater of society. I have had boys who had been told they would go mad. . . . and they were making a brave attempt to become mad. The far-reaching effects of parental suggestion must be realised. I am doubtful if any subsequent influence has the power to counteract a suggestion coming from a child's gods. In my work I always try to get the parent to undo the mischief, for I know that I mean nothing to the child. I come into his or her life too late to be of any psychological value. Hence it comes that when a boy hears me say that masturbation cannot make people mad he cannot believe me. Father's voice heard when the boy was five was the voice of God.

Further experience has shown me the limits of psychological treatment. Years ago I optimistically took on the treatment of bad cases . . . the Sleepy Sickness victim, the

child who had been injured at birth, etc. With much internal opposition I have been compelled to see that I have failed with such cases. I find them impenetrable, just as an insane person is impenetrable. In one way the question of the abnormal child is similar to that of the ordinary problem child. Neither has any desire to be cured. In psycho-analysis the adult patient comes of his own accord; he wants to be cured of his neurosis. But the child who steals does not come to me to be cured of his stealing. He is sent. He doesn't see why he should change his habits. I have had problem children who could not be cured because they refused to be cured.

It amounts to this that the patient must do his own big share of the cure. And when we consider birth injury cases, where the head has been damaged, Sleepy Sickness cases, where physical damage has been done to the brain, cases of arrested development (the village softy), we see clearly that there can be no hope of co-operation on the part of the patient. It may be that when we know more

of glands we may find such cases are curable. The sad truth is that psychology alone is useless.

Such cases do indeed show apparent improvement under free conditions of living, but the improvement is only skin deep. I thought that Edgar, after years of treatment, was making his way to normality. Then one day I chanced to see him down the town . . . he was driving a phantasy motor-car and was toot-tooting at the corners. The "softy" is fixed in early childhood. The *dementia praecox* case regresses to early infancy. Both are closed books.

The past four years' experience of the social side of a free school has confirmed my faith in self-government. The story of how self-government developed is worth telling. In the days when school consisted of seven pupils self-government was a simple business. Staff and pupils sat round a fire and argued and voted. As the numbers grew the old free and easy weekly meeting remained unchanged. What with seven pupils was a

quiet meeting became, with thirty-seven pupils, pandemonium. The president spent most of his time vainly shouting "Shut up!" Gradually but surely the Schulgemeinde became a police court. Nothing creative was done; the whole session was taken up with accusation and counter-accusation. When at last the Schulgemeinde became impossible I became an autocrat and abolished it. There was a cheer. None was sorry to see the murder of the unwieldly instrument.

There followed a period of No Government. In the main the old rules were kept, although the school knew well that they had no legal existence. The unanimous opinion of the pupils was that the No Rule period was excellent. And for them it was excellent. The older ones treated the school as a first-class hotel. They threw themselves into the pet arm chairs of the staff. They sat up late and went to bed noisily. And they were genuinely surprised when the staff summoned a general meeting to talk about a new government.

"What we want a new government for?" "Better without one."

But the staff explained that they insisted on a government. A No Government era gave the pupils complete freedom at the expense of the staff. It was a bitter meeting, and home-truths flew about. At last, by a narrow majority, the staff had its way, and a new form of government was voted for. After much debate it was decided to try the national form of government, namely election of the few by the many. The new government was to consist of four pupils and two staff.

This form of government had six months' trial. It was a decided success. Its method was to make laws and to post up these laws on the notice board. Any member of the community who disliked a law could call a general meeting and demand a show of hands for or against. The government met once a week to deal with social transgressors. The president called upon six good men (and women) and true to form a court of assessors. They pronounced the innocence or guilt of the victim. Corkhill, the Science Master, vainly

thought to disguise the affair by introducing names like "victim," "assessor," "complainer," but the children would not have these names. They rightly called the thing a court. The accused was a "prisoner in the dock"; the court of assessors was the "jury"; the award was "the sentence" or better "getting it in the neck."

An oft quoted objection to children judges is that they punish too harshly. I find it not so. On the contrary they are very lenient. On no occasion has there been a harsh sentence. And invariably the punishment has had some relation to the crime. Three small girls disturbing the sleep of others . . . punishment: they must go to bed an hour earlier each night for a week. Two boys accused of throwing clods at other boys . . . punishment: Must cart clods to level the hockey field. Often the foreman of the jury will say: "The jury thinks that the case is too silly for words, and decides that nothing will be done." The old Schulgemeinde was jeered at, but the new government was respected.

However, just lately something new has been observed. Although the government was elected by universal suffrage, some of the electors began to feel that they were out of the picture. One lad saw that the only way to be in the new picture was to be the man in the dock. The small group of exhibitionists began to grouse, and one of them went so far as to refuse to carry out his punishment (repairing something he had broken).

The government had a special meeting and offered to resign. No one wanted an election in the middle of a term, and the government withdrew its resignation. Then one member, a pupil, had an idea.

"Let's have a new government every week without an election!"

"But who will choose them?"

"Us!"

I was called in for consultation. (I am never on any government).

"No one will serve on a government chosen by you," I said.

A general meeting was called, and the new plan was put forward. I expected it to be

riddled with shot, but, strangely enough, the meeting accepted it. At the moment we have the queer situation . . . a temporary government elected by a permanent government. I fancy that in the next term the school will awaken to the absurdity of this arrangement. The adults have, of course, left the pupils to find out the rights and wrongs for themselves.

It is unlikely that the school will ever find a settled form of government. Possibly what is wrong with Westminster is that it settled its form of government too early. We have one advantage over Westminster: we choose a member . . . and live with him all the time. We never allow him to forget his election promises.

In conclusion, I say frankly that children are but mildly interested in government. Left to themselves, I question whether they would form a government. In our school I confess that we thrust self-government upon them; self-government is the Staff's only hope of peace. After all, any living together of adults and children must be a compromise.

Their values are not our values, and their manners are not our manners. Stern discipline is the easiest way for the adult to have peace and quiet. Anyone can be a drill sergeant. What the ideal alternative method of securing a quiet life is I do not know. Our Summerhill trials and errors certainly fail to give the adults a quiet life. On the other hand they do not give the children an over-noisy life. Perhaps the ultimate test is happiness, and by this criterion, Summerhill has found an excellent compromise in its self-government.

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